

God's Wisdom: The Revealing Spirit

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Preacher: Brady Owens

[0 : 0 0] verse 6, and I think what I want to do is I want to read the whole thing first and then kind of get us into this. But verse 6 kind of begins in the middle of a thought because it starts with the word yet, and that means it's kind of connected back a little bit.

So I'm going to go ahead and read from verse 1, and we'll just read the whole chapter, and it'll kind of tie everything together. When we get to verse 6, I want you to be looking for things that begin to repeat. For example, in verse 6 through 9, there's going to be a word that repeats probably more than any other word. And then in verses 10 through 13, there's another word that sort of repeats there. And just kind of be on the lookout for what it seems to be the thing that is the repetition. Beginning in verse 1, though, Paul says this, And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling. And my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Yet among the mature, we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or the rulers of this age who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret hidden wisdom from God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love Him. These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the Spirit of that person which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts 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 understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom, but taught by the Holy, but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. Okay.

There's a word that you may be familiar with, and I'm not sure. I may have used this word before, but it's a word that's, syncretism is the word, syncretism. It's S-Y-N-C-R-E-T-I-S-M, syncretism. And you have the prefix S-Y-N, which is with, right? So together. And then you have the last part, which I don't know what it means, but the two parts together is the idea of mixing two things. And it's typically used to talk about one truth claim and another truth claim from different sources being brought together in order to create something sort of new. Okay. So you borrow from different truth claims and bring them together to try to make them work together. A good modern example of this would be Mormonism.

Mormonism has the Father, Jesus, the Son, the Bible, grace, salvation. They have these words, these concepts. They use the Bible, yet they also marry with this things borrowed from Gnosticism, things borrowed from Freemasonry, things borrowed from some Jewish cult religions, and they've mixed it all together and they've come out with Mormonism. Okay. So that's syncretism where you take these things, mix them together, and you come out with something new. That was something that has happened a lot throughout history and was going on in the Corinthian church as well, because they were taking Greek philosophy and the truths of the gospel and they were marrying them together. Rather than seeing Greek philosophy as a tool or as some other thing like that, they saw it as a complementary truth to be brought together so that the truths of God's word would then

submit to the philosophy and change so that we could be combined together. And that's the reason that Paul's having to write this letter, because that syncretism that they're doing is causing division in the church, because everybody has their own ideas about how things ought to be done. And so he's been after solving this problem of the division, and we've seen him talk about the powerful gospel, we've seen him talk about his choice of who's going to be saved, we've seen him talk about the preaching of the gospel, the necessity of the preaching of the gospel, and now he's moving to talk about something else. And it's what he's talking about here is something that's happening historically, he gives us this historical thing, and then he gives us a theological sort of lesson related to the work of the Holy Spirit. And that's, if you take this whole section, it really is about the work of the Holy Spirit and what the Holy Spirit's doing, kind of behind the scenes and throughout history to bring these together. Now, as I was reading it, could you tell what the primary repeating word was in verses 6 through 9? Yeah, it's the word wisdom, that's right.

[6:18] And could you tell what the repeating word was from 10 through 13? Spirit, there you go. So that is, if you look for that kind of thing when you read, you pretty much have a good idea of what he's talking about, because he's going to be talking about the wisdom of God, then he's going to be talking about the Spirit of God. And then verses 14 through 16, he's moving on to what I'm calling kind of a response to these things. So let's just pick it up here in verse 6 and talk about this wisdom of God, because what he's doing and connecting to what goes before, he says he wanted to be able to preach the gospel in a certain way with the demonstration of spirit and the power so that their faith rests upon the power of God.

And then he comes back and he says, yet among the mature, we do impart wisdom. Now, why is Paul saying mature? Who are the mature? Who's he talking about here? I think that one of the things that Paul is doing here is he's kind of poking, he's kind of poking and being a little bit cheeky towards the Corinthians, because the Corinthians think of themselves as mature. They think of themselves as super spiritual. Matter of fact, they call themselves the spirituals. And you'll see that through the book of 1 Corinthians that Paul comes back to that word again and again and uses it. And I think here, when he's talking about yet among the mature, I think that he is not saying somebody specific, but he's saying that to say, what we give is to people who are truly spiritual, people who are truly mature. So a mature person is just a mature person. He's not really pointing at the Corinthians. He's not really pointing at anybody else. He's just saying, this is what we do. And he's saying that because he's kind of chastising them for thinking that they're mature. And he tells them that here's what we do. We impart wisdom. So now he's borrowing the same word, right? The Greeks have their philosophy and their wisdom. And the Corinthians have adopted that. And he's saying, listen, here's your wisdom compared to God's wisdom. We impart a wisdom. And he gives us a description of it, right? The first is, it's not a wisdom of this age, or the rulers of this age. Now, I think when he's talking about the rulers of this age, he's talking about the people who are in charge, maybe you could go back to Jerusalem and look at the rulers there. You could think about people who are ruling in the

Roman Empire, people who are thought leaders, if you want to think of it that way. I think what he's saying is that, listen, this is not a wisdom that came from my Pharisee buddies. This is not a wisdom that came from Aristotle. This is not of this age. It is something entirely different. So he's setting up that contrast between the wisdom they've adopted from men and the wisdom that he speaks from God. He goes on. And part of the reason that so it's so bad to adopt the wisdom of the world is because it's passing away, right? That's what he says at the end of verse six. Then in verse seven, he talks about it as a, we impart a secret hidden wisdom of God. So how many of you, your translations, instead of secret and hidden, uses the word hidden mystery?

Okay. Mystery, the hidden wisdom. Okay. So, so the, that's really a better reading of that because in my translation, the ESV, the word secret means hidden and the word hidden means mystery. So I'm not sure why they did it that way. Um, except they were maybe trying to be different from some of the other translations, but here's the idea there. The new Testament speaks of a mystery.

[10:23] And when Paul uses this term, he's talking about it as something that was in types and shadows in the old Testament that not everybody picked up on, but many did. And that in this new Testament age, now, instead of the types and shadows, all of that's been removed and now it's been clearly disclosed. So a mystery is not something that is currently still a mystery, but it's something that has been revealed and solved. The way to think about this would be like a, like if we, if we took this room and we blacked out all the windows and we shut the doors and turned off all the

lights and it's, it's midnight and we come in this room and we put a candle in the middle of the room that would give us only so much light, right? And the thing is, is that that amount of light doesn't change the shape of the room or the things that are in the room. But if we stay with that light, eventually it begins to get brighter and brighter. And because our eyes adjust, we can begin to see more and more in the room, right? We may not be able to see everything because maybe that little candle just can't spread its light out as far as it needs to. Maybe the room is bigger than this, but if somebody were to come in and all of a sudden flip on the light, then we could see everything as it has always been. That's the image that you can think about with Old Testament and New Testament.

The Old Testament is like that candle that it gives enough light to know that we're kind of in this room, but it doesn't tell us everything. And when Jesus comes on the scene, it's like somebody flips on the light and now everything gets exposed. And what is here in the gospel is not fundamentally different from what was in the Old Testament. It's just now fully revealed. Does that make sense? So Paul's basically saying the wisdom that I teach is something that has been from the beginning, Old Testament, and is now fully revealed in Jesus Christ. And that's why he's saying that. Then he calls it, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. So not only is this wisdom connected back to the Old Testament, it's the full revelation of things, but it's also something that God decreed or predestined before all ages. And I know we don't like this word sometimes, predestined, but here's the thing. The part of who Jesus is, his coming into this world, was predestined by God before ages, which means before the creation. And one of the things that means, if you think about, we'll use an analogy to think about this, and if God were thinking in logical order, and we could put numbers on what he was thinking, what did he think first, what did he think second, okay? Now this is not necessarily the way God works, but this is just for us to kind of grasp and understand it. Then his first thought was not create a world. His first thought would have been of Christ crucified, right? And so because that's the first thing, then everything that comes after is for the purpose of bringing this about, the glorification of Christ through his death and resurrection and ascension and ruling and reigning, right? So Jesus is always first. So that's what Paul's meaning is that, listen, your wisdom comes from the rulers of the world who are passing away. The wisdom I'm speaking, this is what founded the world. So you can kind of see this contrast that Paul's drawing between the two different kinds of wisdom. And then when you get into verse eight, he says, none of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Now Paul's giving us a possibility, right? If things had been differently, then this is what would have happened, okay? What? That's correct. That's correct. [14 : 51] That's correct. I think he's saying this not because, not because it's possible for it to be different, but in order to emphasize a point that these people, the rulers of this age, and he's going back, I think here to Jerusalem, looking at the Pharisees and Pilate and all these things, that if they had understood the wisdom that he has, they would have been like, oh no, I'm not touching this guy.

We're not. We're not. Because then they would have understood who he was. But they didn't. They acted in ignorance. And remember, ignorance is not an excuse for sin, right? In Leviticus chapter four, we have that whole section about unintentional sins, right? Paul even describes himself in first Timothy as one who was a blasphemer, persecutor, insolent, who's an opponent. But I received mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief. Well, why did he need mercy if ignorance is okay? Well, he needed mercy because ignorance is not okay, right? So here's the point. What Paul is doing then is he's saying there is something that exists outside of creation and it is this massive cosmic plan of God for Jesus Christ to be crucified, resurrected, ascended, exalted, ruling and reigning for all eternity. That is this massive cosmic plan of God. This is the wisdom of God and your wisdom can't hold a candle to it. So what God has decreed, what God has planned, this is the true way of life.

So that's sort of this first part. And it really does call on us to say we need to trust what God has said. We need to trust what God has said. We need to lean on what it is that God has said. You know, one of the things that I think about with this is I think about how little we know as humanity. I'll give you one example. That cup that you've got right there in front of you. I could tell you something about that cup, right? That's a cup. And it holds liquid. And it's styrofoam and it'll kind of keep it cool or warm. But like eventually it's gonna, you know, condensate on the outside and, you know, and I don't really know anything else about that. But if we had a scientist come in here, he

could probably tell us a little bit more about that, right? And he could probably say, well, this is polystyrene or this is polyethylene or this is polywally, you know, whatever it is.

[17 : 38] And it could tell us all kinds of things about it. And he could tell us about the straw and he could tell us about maybe the liquid that's in there, that it's made of these kinds of chemicals. And that would really impress us because we would be like, wow, I mean, yeah, I don't know that stuff, but he knows that stuff. And that's kind of interesting, but there's still so much about it that he doesn't know. Because if God were to step in, God could say, yeah, that's so fascinating.

It's interesting to me, all the molecules that are in there and the little atoms and electrons that make up those molecules, I remember where they were 2000 years ago. As a matter of fact, I remember speaking them into existence.

Now there's a knowledge there that knows everything. And the problem is, is that as humans, because we test things because of the scientific endeavor, which is a good thing, it's a good thing to have science and to test things. But in our arrogance, we think we know more than what we know. But the problem is, is we don't have all the data. And that's the problem with the Corinthians. They think that they know because they're leaning upon what these men have said rather than what God has said. Yeah. Yeah. You know, what's interesting about that quotation is that it comes from Isaiah 64.

And beginning back in chapter 63, Isaiah has a song of lament. It's a song of sorrow, right? It's kind of a mourning song. And he's looking at the state of Israel in his time. And he knows that God has been promising things towards the future, things that are both destruction and salvation. And in this song that God inspired Isaiah to sing and to write, he is calling on God to rescue his people.

[19 : 34] And as he does that, he goes back to the Exodus and he thinks about God's redemption of his people in the Exodus. And he says, God, bring another Exodus. Do that which no eye has seen and nobody has ever heard of before. That's sort of what he's getting at. And so that really brings that kind of home where it's like you have no clue. You don't understand what, what, who God is or what it is that God is doing in this world. And so, yeah, no, I totally agree. Yeah, absolutely.

I ain't seen nothing yet. That's right. Okay. So he moves from there to verses 10 through 13. And, and we, we already recognize that we have the word spirit used a lot here. So now we're talking about the spirit of God. And it's interesting because verse 10 just begins kind of the middle of a sentence in the ESV and says, these things God has revealed to us through the spirit. Now let's just, let's just pause on that, that amount. These things, what things? According to the context, what would we have to connect these things to? Exactly. That cosmic plan, the mystery of God, the wisdom of God, the whole enchilada about who Jesus is, what he's going to do, all of those things, these things, that's what Paul's talking about. Even, even making reference to Isaiah and the redemption that God brings that nobody can really understand, he's saying these things. And now what's happened with these things? Well, God has revealed to us. So God, the father has revealed these things to us.

Now the us here is a little bit tricky, but I think that the us here is Paul, the apostle as an apostle, as well as the other apostles. I don't think he means the Corinthians here. And the reason I don't think he means the Corinthians here is for two reasons. Number one, he begins to address them directly in chapter three, which flows out of what we're going to be talking about here. But also the way he's talking about what's happened so that he gets this is something that you would notice all the apostles happening, right? They all were promised that the spirit would lead them into further truth. So, and there's other passages where Paul talks about how they have been given this mystery by God, the apostles. You can go look up Ephesians chapter three, verse seven through nine to kind of see that.

So these things, this big cosmic plan of God, he's revealed it to the apostles through the spirit. So Paul's not saying, I know about this because I'm smarter than Aristotle.

[22 : 30] He's saying, I know this because God has disclosed it to me. God has told me about it by his spirit. Well, how does the spirit know this? That's really the question you have to ask as you read the next phrase for the spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. Now think about the depths of God for just a second. If God is infinite, how vast is his knowledge? Infinite.

So there's no end to the knowledge of God. That's really hard to fathom. That's right. Speaking of deeper, if you think of God's knowledge as a, as a well, how long would it take you to get to the bottom of his knowledge? Yeah, you couldn't.

How long would it take the Holy Spirit to get to the bottom of it? It, it is. I love this image, right? This image that the knowledge of God is infinite and the Holy Spirit, because he is infinite, knows it infinitely.

So that's why the Holy Spirit is the one who reveals this to us, because he knows God, because that's his, that's his illustration in verse 11, right? The illustration is, for who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him?

So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the spirit of God. So he's, he's trying to help them understand, you don't, you can't just get this knowledge because some yehu walks into town and gives a good speech. That's not, it's not because there's a good Ted talk.

[24 : 11] It's not because there's scientists rolling out data for you to look at. The only way to have this true knowledge is because the Holy Spirit has revealed it to the apostles. We can't, right. And he's only going to reveal to us that which we need to know.

He says in verse 12, so now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit who is from God. And here's the thing that we might understand the things freely given us by God. So not only has God revealed it by the spirit, but we understand what we're talking about by the same spirit. We're able to grasp these mysteries. We're able to understand and make the connections. You ever read the book of Hebrews and notice how much it refers back to the old Testament. I mean, how did Paul figure all that out? Right? Well, the Holy spirit of God, it guided him and directed him and inspired him to know all of these things and what that, what that means.

Um, then verse 13, he says, and we impart this in words, not taught by human wisdom, but taught by the spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. So you have two things here that I think are important. The first thing is let's trace this out in verses six through nine. We have him telling us that the wisdom of God is this cosmic plan of Christ crucified, resurrected, ascended, exalted, glorified praise for all eternity. That plan was revealed to the apostles by the Holy spirit so that they know it. So that they know it and they understand it. They have it, they understand it. And then he then imparts that to others to, as he calls them, he calls them spiritual people. So he's poking the Corinthians again, because what they've done is they've taken what Paul has imparted as being just child's play.

And a stepping stone to greater things. And Paul is saying, what you have is passing away. What I have is eternal. And this is what I give to spiritual people. You think you're spiritual, but you're not because you don't accept what I'm giving to you. Does that make sense?

[26 : 48] And so what's fascinating here is this pathway though, that God's plan gets revealed to the apostles and the, the apostles pass it on. They impart it in words taught by the Holy spirit. Now here's the question.

What the apostles passed on. What the apostles passed on. And imparted by word taught by the spirit. Where is that information today?

There you go. Not a trick question. Everybody's looking at me like, is this a trick question? That's exactly right. How much time went by between when Jesus was resurrected and they started first teaching people?

No. No. Oh. Yes. So, so I think I understand what you're saying. First of all, you, you've got a couple of things working with you here, right? This is, I know this is off the cuff here, right? So the disciples all were familiar with the old Testament.

That's the first step, right? Now they didn't quite understand everything, but you'll notice that Jesus, we, we get this thing in the book of Luke where. Teaches the, the two on the road to Emmaus and then later to his disciples that he taught them everything in the old Testament.

[28 : 35] Self. Right. So he, he, he taught them some things and the, and there's a lot that he taught them. That's not written down. The end of John's gospel. It talks about how, if everything was written down that Jesus said and did, the world couldn't contain the books.

Okay. So there was a lot. Them for three years. Now, Paul is untimely born. He is called as an apostle later in, in Acts chapter nine, right?

He disappears for 14 years. And he talks about that in Galatians. And, and during that time, the Lord himself taught Paul and, and gave him instruction, helped him understand the old Testament and light of Christ.

Right. So Jesus, Jesus in Acts chapter one, ascends back to the father. They wait something like somebody have to help me with these days because they waited for a period of time after Jesus ascended.

And then the, you had the day of Pentecost. And that's when you begin to see that they know so much already. And that's Acts chapter two. So I can't remember how much time is between the two. [29 : 48] Do you know Michelle? Anyway, it's, I want to say it's something like 120 days or 30 days or a week. Like, I just, I can't remember.

It's do what? It wasn't right away, but it wasn't, it wasn't like years. So what's interesting is that the apostles have knowledge in such a way that they shouldn't because of the, the supernatural of the Lord.

And, and, and, and here's what, here's what amazes me about that. There's so much in scripture that has things like this, that give us a clear indication that the apostles had knowledge.

And they passed that on to us, but they didn't have it by themselves. They had it because the Holy Spirit revealed it to them. And we have so many people today who will look at things and begin to talk about how the Lord speaks to them.

And they've got knowledge of their life or things they ought to do or things in somebody else's life because God is revealing things to them. And they'll use the language of reveal and God speaking to me and this kind of a thing.

[30 : 55] And I think that that betrays a belief in what we've just talked about. Because if God has spoken to you, then should that not be something that gets written down that we all memorize as scripture?

And almost everybody that I ask that to says, well, no, because they understand that what it is they're saying about God speaking to me is not on the same level as the scripture.

So I just usually argue for, well, then just stop using that word. Let's use a different word. Because we all know that there are times that we've prayed for things. We've asked God to help us with wisdom, with decisions, with something that, you know, we need in our life.

As we think about maybe somebody who's sick that we're praying for healing or somebody that their spiritual state is bad and we're praying for that. Or we even have a logistical thing about our own lives that we're praying for and wanting God to work in.

And we know that there's been times that we've had a thought occur to us. We've had a moment open up right in front of us for us to, you know, like we prayed for an open door.

[32 : 05] And all of a sudden right there there's an open door in front of us and we're going like, okay. You know, I'll walk through that little door, you know. We all know we've had those experiences. And the way that I like to classify those experiences is either you can use the language of something like, you know, God is guiding me, leading me, directing me.

Or it's just the language of in God's providence, this is what he's done, you know. I think we get afraid to say that this idea that I've come up with and this thing that I feel like that I should do because I've been praying about it and I've been wanting to do something.

And so now I have this idea to do something. We're afraid to say I have an idea because it doesn't feel very spiritual to say that. So we want to say God has given me this idea.

And it's just unnecessary to baptize it in that language. It's just not necessary because if you trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and you're submitted to him and you're praying and you have an idea, it's a sanctified idea, you know, and it's okay.

The point, though, is we want to be sure that we do things by the word of God and we put all of our hope and trust there. So as churches begin to think about problems, begin to think about challenges, begin to think about ministries that they want to get involved in, things we want to do, the number one question or the number one statement that we should make when the ministry presents itself is what does the word say?

[33 : 40] What we don't want to do is we don't want to initially lean on things that we know from experience, from desires or anything else.

We want to initially lean upon the word of God and what does the word of God say? Because there are some things that would be very clear that we should and should not do or that we should and should not run after, you know.

And I think that's also true in our personal lives. What do the scriptures say? That's the initial knee-jerk question every Christian ought to be asking, particularly as we think about what are we going to do as a church, you know.

You know, we put on Facebook the thing to give money to the victims of the hurricane. Sunday, I'll make mention of it. So if you want to give again, we can do that.

But the question would be, okay, here are these victims. We want to do something. What should we do? Well, the first question should be, well, what do the scriptures say? Right?

[34 : 45] And there's all kinds of scriptures we could point to that talk about sharing what we have. Right? Let us not grow, let us not neglect doing good and sharing what we have, Hebrews tells us.

Because such sacrifices are pleasing to God. So there's all kinds of places that scripture would help us know and understand what to do. Okay. Is that clear?

I'm going to move on now. Okay. Clear as mud. Great. So then here's how he ends this section. He ends this section, verses 14 through 16. And really, he begins to lay out two kinds of people.

And I don't believe that he has necessarily specific people in mind. I think he's drawing a larger sort of principle here as he talks about natural men.

And here's the interesting thing about that word natural. That word natural is actually the word for soul. And it's this idea of a soulish man. A soulish man.

[35 : 43] Somebody who is just living in this world. Somebody who's not living for the next.

Somebody who doesn't notice anything about the next world or the supernatural world. He's just talking about somebody who's just soulish or natural.

And then he talks about somebody who's spiritual. This would be somebody who is a Christian. Somebody who doesn't recognize the things of God. And here's what I believe. I do not believe that he thinks that the Corinthians are spiritual people.

Right? He doesn't believe that they're spiritual people. But let's look at what he says about the natural man. The natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God. So he's just talked about we impart these things. So this cosmic plan of God revealed to the apostles.

The apostles impart this. But the natural people don't accept it. And they don't accept it for two reasons. Number one, they don't accept it because it's folly. And that word folly means moronic. Okay? When my brothers and I had BB gun fights, that was moronic. Okay? So the natural person thinks that that's moronic. But also, they're not able to understand it because it's spiritually discerned.

[36 : 50] The things that the apostle teaches, it's necessary to have a spiritual discernment that we're able to understand these things.

It's one thing to be able to take the words of John 3.16 and go, For God so loved. What does that mean? Well, for is for. And God is God. So is so.

And world is world. It's one thing to say that. And a lost person can read those words and tell you what those words mean. But what they cannot do is give the spiritual evaluation of that truth.

There's a moral, spiritual evaluation and a love and an appreciation and an application of that truth that a spiritual person makes.

A lost person can't do that. They can't just open the Bible on their own, apart from the Holy Spirit of God, and read something and get anything out of it.

[37 : 52] If a lost person opens a Bible, you hear stories all the time from the Gideons. Somebody in a hotel room opens up a Bible, they start reading it, and God saves them. Why is that?

Because the Holy Spirit of God opened their eyes in that moment to be able to understand it. He did a change in their heart to give them that spiritual discernment to be able to understand it. But if the Holy Spirit doesn't do that, then they're not going to understand it.

They do not understand it because those truths are spiritually discerned, spiritually evaluated, spiritually judged. Then he says the spiritual person judges or discerns or evaluates all things.

The Greek word behind discerns and judges is exactly the same. So the spiritual person does have this spiritual evaluation. They do have this ability to look at that.

And why is that? Because at the very end of verse 16, he says we have the mind of Christ. You have the mind of Christ, you have the Holy Spirit living in you. This is why the spiritual person judges all things.

[38 : 56] But then in the middle he says, but is himself to be judged by no one. So the spiritual person cannot be judged by the natural person. So what's happening here is he's moving from talking about understanding the revelation that the apostles received and they've imparted.

He's moved from talking about that to the people who do accept that, like himself, that they cannot be judged by lost people.

They can't be judged by the natural, the soulish person. And why is that? Because for who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?

That's an Old Testament reference. That's basically saying this idea that when God comes to evaluate your life, he does not depend upon the opinions of the lost people in your world. He doesn't look at what they say about you. He doesn't look at their reaction to you. Can you imagine? Can you imagine if God were to judge us and evaluate us by how the lost people in our lives responded to us?

[40 : 06] That would be miserable. That would be damning. Right? But that's not what God does because we're spiritual people. Now here's the kicker. This means that people are going to respond very differently to what's going on in the scriptures.

And to deal with the Corinthians, he's basically kind of putting them in their place because listen to chapter 3 verse 1.

But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.

So he's laid all this out and he's saying, listen, I know you think you're super spiritual because you've read Aristotle. I know you think you're super spiritual because when people speak, you get all goose bumpy and all this kind of stuff.

I know you think you're super spiritual and there's so much more that'll get added as we go through Corinthians that they do. Like they're tongue speakers. Okay? They're tongue speakers.

[41 : 13] If you think about the whole thing about gift of tongues, these people think they're super spiritual because they speak in tongues as well. And so he's saying, listen, I know you think you're that, but you're really fleshly.

And I couldn't speak to you as spiritual people taking this wisdom of God and imparting it to you because you think it's folly and because you're not understanding it because it's spiritually discerned and there's a problem in your heart.

And that sounds pretty damning. And it's like telling a bunch of Christians, you're acting like a bunch of lost people. And that's a pretty terrible thing to say to Christians, but he comes back and he says this at the end of that verse, as infants in Christ.

And so there's a little hope there, right? A little hope that he's given. It's like, okay, really the problem is is that you're super immature. You're still a baby.

You still are cutting teeth. You still need someone to wipe your nose and change your diaper because you're not spiritually mature. Now, how does this solve the division?

[42 : 27] If you can just imagine for a second, this is the truth. And if you don't accept the truth, then you're going to have to have a truth from somewhere. And so in the Corinthian church, you've got people who are saying, well, you know, no, this is what the truth is.

And so we're going to lean and rest in on this. And somebody else going, no, it's this, or no, it's this, or no, it's this. Because they all started here and then jumped from the gospel to something else. That'd be like in a church where you've got, you know, a question or a problem or an opportunity for ministry. And this person over here says, no, we should never do that because I've seen that fail a thousand times, you know.

Or you got a person over here that says, oh, no, you know, we absolutely ought to do that. I saw a church when they did that, they grew from 25 to 3,000, you know. Or you got another person who says, well, you know, I'm just really uncomfortable with that.

And I'm not sure that, because that just seems wrong to me, you know. Or you got another person who says, man, that sounds like fun, let's do it. You know, you got all of these opinions that people then base out of some other thing that can be brought to bear on a decision that the church ought to make.

[43 : 38] When in reality, it's like, you know, those may be important for us to discuss in a bit. But the first thing we have to discuss is this. What does the Bible say? Because if we get there, then we've just laid down a pretty good layer of weed block over division that kind of keeps it from springing up within the church.

It's not the only line of defense, but it certainly is a first line of defense. And so even us as a church, you know, it'd be easy for us to think and go, like even the victims of the hurricanes, we could look at that and we could begin to think to ourselves, oh, you know what?

Let's send them all doilies. Because we can all make doilies and we can send that to them, you know. But immediately, I mean, all of you would look at me like you're crazy, you know.

