**The Spiritual First**

*And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom.****2****For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.****3****And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling,****4****and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,****5****so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*

***6****Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away.****7****But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.****8****None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.****9****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”—*

***10****these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.****11****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.****12****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.*

As believers, we are called to steward God’s mission of Spiritual wisdom. Greetings in Christ to you all as we talk today about wisdom, a topic closely connected to our faith life. There are two kinds of wisdom in the world: Spiritual and unspiritual[[1]](#footnote-1). One comes from God and through His Spirit, while the other comes from the world and is encouraged and proliferated by the cooperation of man and the devil. Today’s message is a call to believers to focus on Spiritual wisdom. Therefore, we’re going to see just how this call is to be lived out as Jesus-people.

A Christian is called to make their faith-life a priority. Paul the Apostle expresses his own spiritual ministry uniquely. He says that he did not come to the Corinthian church with lofty speech or wisdom. Why is that? It is because the Sophists, who were a school of philosophers at the time who excelled in argumentation and rhetorical skills, showed off their human wisdom to the public as if those victories in debate were somehow valuable and important. Paul did not want to base the authority or truth of his preaching on philosophical victories. Rather, he desired that Christ crucified be the wisdom that his audiences heard, because Christ crucified is the true message of wisdom, and for the believer, that truth was power from God. This is the reason why it was important for believers to hear the message of Christ crucified as “God’s secret wisdom”, which for the world was already rejected. It was important that Christians understood the message of the Gospel and the life that it required through the Holy Spirit, since the things that pertain to God are only comprehensible to and shareable by those that have the Holy Spirit. The believer, who follows Jesus wholeheartedly and obeys Him, is the one who shows by his life and actions that he has received the Holy Spirit – and not the one who still lives on worldly principles of wisdom. Why is this true? This is so that the Spiritual one can continue in her faith walk and understand that the mind of Christ is being built within her life.

This is akin to when a new building is going to be built, but the workers only have the blueprint. For some reason, they do not yet have the final picture of what the building is going to look like yet. However, if they continue to build according to that correct blueprint, bringing each brick to its rightful place with the guidance of their supervisor, they will eventually receive the final “picture” and see the building go up through their efforts.

Dearly beloved, above all else, the Spiritual things are the most important. If we are Christians, then, we are living and growing to have the mind of Christ. Notice: the Corinthian believers were swayed by philosophies. Today there are similar philosophies that are causing the faith of many to stray, and many believers are becoming either weak or lazy in their devotion to Christ.

However, the one that desires to strengthen their faith and walk the God-pleasing path is called to receive Spiritual things[[2]](#footnote-2) from God and then to mature in them to have the mind of Christ. The mind of Christ is Jesus’ way of thinking. It is His tight connection with the Word of God – it is His flexibility in conveying God’s true message. It is Jesus’ maturity at a level that allowed him to convey Spiritual realities in ordinary language to very ordinary people. To have Christ’s mind, God expects that you first care for your own spiritual life and only then plan how to express that received and matured faith.

Again, it is only the one who is Spiritual who has the capacity to understand and accept the revelation of the Holy Spirit about Christ. The one who lacks the Holy Spirit cannot accept Christ but must first repent of his sins and choose Christ by faith, and only then will the Holy Spirit have the opportunity to teach him Christ through the Scripture-study and sermons.

May the Lord make our Spiritual lives grow through His Spirit, so that we will be able to share His Wisdom, which is Jesus Himself to others. The Lord bless you all. Amen.

1. I capitalize “Spiritual” to denote something that is related or comes from the Holy Spirit, and not just any spirit. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Starting with the Gospel message itself – and then all else that flows from it. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)