

### Paul's Manner of Declaration | 1 Corinthians 2:1-8

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- Verse 1 – 5 – See Session 5
- Verse 6 –
  - Paul is clearly not against **wisdom** but against *worldly wisdom*. His teaching is that faith should be birthed out of a simple gospel presentation from the Word. Later, for **them that are perfect** (that is, those who have come into faith, which is the *desired end* of the Gospel presentation), there is a time of wisdom beyond the simplicity of Gospel facts.
  - The word **perfect** is from the root *τελος* [telos], the ultimate end of a matter.
  - The wisdom of believers is neither **of this world** nor **of the princes of this world** who will soon **come to nought** (it is specifically the world's leaders who are spoken of as coming **to nought**).
  - **Come to nought** is *καταργέω* [katargeo], a compound of three Greek terms: *kata* (the prefix of ultimate conclusion), *a* (the negator), and *ergo* (effective power). Thus, the leaders will come to a point of having *zero effective power*.
- Verse 7 –
  - A **mystery** in the Bible is something previously unrevealed, and that can only be known by revelation.
  - This mystery was not a surprise to God, but rather was ordained by God.
  - Paul is the "Apostle of the Mystery," this mystery being revealed to him and through him.
  - The mystery is the offer of salvation to all the people of the world prior to the establishment of the Kingdom and thus entirely unrelated to the Law and to Israel.
  - The understanding of the mystery is essential to good theology.
- Verse 8 –
  - The **princes of this world** (literally, *of this age*) are both the Jewish leaders and the Roman leaders, each of whom had part in the crucifixion.
  - Jesus asked the Father to forgive them **for they know now that they do** (Luke 23:34).
  - Peter said that their actions were **through ignorance** (Acts 3:17).
  - Paul's testimony in this verse is thus the third report of the leader's lack of knowledge.

### Living in the Mystery | 1 Corinthians 2:9-16

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- Verse 9 –
  - This verse is often used out of context in reference to heaven, or to things supposedly *beyond understanding*.
  - In its original context (Isaiah 64:4), it is a plea for God to come to the aid of Israel in the last days and show His strength and glory like never before.
  - Paul borrows the words to say, in effect, *what we see today is completely unknown to mankind in previous dispensations*.
- Verse 10 –
  - **revealed by his spirit** –
    - It is a translation question as to whether this should be **God hath revealed them** or **God hath revealed it** (compare Matt. 6:17). In my view, the single thing that was revealed is the mystery (v. 7). The sentence structure is such that vv. 7b-9 become almost parenthetical, and 10 picks up the thought of v. 7a.
    - The mystery was revealed first to Paul (Eph. 3:3-5, Col 1:27, etc). Initially the revelation was to Paul alone, but Paul's commission to the nations makes it a revelation **unto us**.
  - **the Spirit searcheth...**
    - More literally, *for the Spirit searches all, even the depth of God*.

- The mystery was **hidden** (v. 7, Eph. 3:9) thus only available to the Spirit.
  - The mystery is one of **the deep things of God** which a believer should seek to understand fully. It can be understood because it has now been revealed.
- Verse 11 - Just as I am the only one that truly knows my own mind, so the Spirit of God is the only one that can truly know the mind of God.
- Verses 12-13a -
  - Paul claims that the original mystery was received by the *Holy* Spirit and **not the spirit of the world**.
  - It was revealed **that we might know** (for how could we know a mystery unless it be revealed).
  - Now, however, this mystery having been revealed, we now **speak** the mystery - that is, what was once secret and hidden can now be freely spoken.
    - What once required a revelation now requires only words of communication.
    - It is a fundamental error to believe that one must enter a secret realm to know the mind of God today. All one must do is read the Scriptures literally and in context.
- Verse 13b –
  - **not in words which man's wisdom teacheth...** - As Paul has stated repeatedly in this chapter, the wisdom of the Christian faith is Bible-based, not philosophy based, thus drawing spiritual conclusions from spiritual words.
  - **comparing spiritual things with spiritual** - Much of the church growth movement has compared and drawn conclusions from *physical* things to decipher spiritual truths.
- Verse 14 –
  - Many have tried to prove from these words that unsaved men cannot understand the things of God. These words say no such thing. Rather, they continue the chapter-long argument that *man's words, man's wisdom, man's ways* will not lead to *spiritual fruit*. The one who **receiveth not the things of the Spirit** cannot, therefore, understand the things which he has not welcomed.
  - The contrast is between the ψυχικός [psychikos] and the πνευματικῶς [pneumatikos].
    - The *psyche* is something that all animal life has, thus is **natural**.
    - The *pneuma* is something only mankind possesses and gives him ability to connect with God.
    - The *psyche* is never used in a positive sense, but always either fully negative (James 3:15) or negative by comparison (1 Cor. 15:44). One wonders, then, why the Christian world is enamored with *psychology*, which is a field which chiefly draws conclusions from the natural world rather than the spiritual world.
- Verses 15-16 –
  - These words effectively say, *the person who lives in the spiritual realm will discern all things that come his way, but those in the "psyche" realm will never understand the spiritual man nor his ways (ways which are foolishness unto him* (v. 14).
  - If you have **the mind of Christ** expect to be misunderstood, misquoted, and generally disliked by the world.