

1 COR 2:10-16 REVELATION, INSPIRATION, ILLUMINATION

Paul has been addressing the sin of the church in Corinth. Disunity was the first sin that he rebuked them of, as they had factions among them. Those factions were somewhat like the factions that existed in the Greek world involving the different philosophies. They carried this worldly way of thinking right into the church and it was causing a party spirit of division. Paul told them that he had come into Corinth not preaching anything but Christ crucified. This is the message given to him by God. Christ is his motivation, not his pride and arrogance. The message he has is direct from God, as a matter of fact. It is called revelation, the word inspired from God Himself, to Paul who writes down this revelation to the Christians in Corinth. This wisdom from God is far above all the wisdom of the world. Since it supersedes all the philosophies and wisdom of the world, Paul reminds them that they have something much better than what the world has to offer. God has spoken and He only speaks to His own children. Those who are not His, cannot understand His revelation. His revelation is what the Bible is and the result of what God said. There is absolutely no better thing than God's truth, which is how we come to know God. It is impossible for man to discover God's truth on his own. Man can't come to God on his own, but God has come to him. The Holy Spirit has invaded the world and has shown him God through revelation, inspiration, and illumination.

1. REVELATION

2:10-11

A. HOW? THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the agent of communication and transmission. The first step of transmission is revelation. God used angels many times to communicate to man, but revelation he did not give to angels to give to man. The Holy Spirit is the author of Scripture, which is the pure Word of God. For Him to be qualified to revealing the Word, Paul compares the Spirit's knowledge of God's mind to a human being's knowledge of his own mind. Nobody knows a person as well as he knows himself. The innermost thoughts, the deep recesses of the heart, are known only by ourselves. The Holy Spirit, being a part of the Trinity, knows the thoughts of God as we know our own thoughts. The Holy Spirit knows the depths and thoughts of God intimately and He is the one who reveals the knowledge of God to man. He would reveal the truth to prophets who in turn would write the truth down.

2 Pet 1:21—This is proof of the divine authority of scriptures.

Revelation was given to the writers of scripture, such as the prophets and apostles. This has already been done as it is used in the past tense. Revelation is what the Bible is.

B. WHERE? IN THE BIBLE

We have in the Bible a revelation by God from God.

The Bible is the Spirit's vehicle for bringing God's revelation.

C. WHAT? DEPTHS OF GOD

It is only by the Spirit of God that we understand the things of God,

especially the deep things. The Holy Spirit has knowledge of all things as He enters into the most secret counsels of God. The Spirit of God knows the things of God because He is one with God. He is the one who makes known to us the purpose and will of God.

D. SPIRIT'S KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S MIND

Who can have such a thorough knowledge of God but God?

2. INSPIRATION

2:12-13

You could have God standing on a mountain shouting it all out. How would it come? Well, let's find out because that takes us to the second step of the Spirit's transmission of God's truth and that is inspiration.

A. WHAT IS IT?—The process of transmission of God's truth

2 Tim 3:16-----God-breathed

It is technically called verbal inspiration.

Every word is revealed and inspired and authoritative.

We have what we have by inspiration of God as the apostles received the revelation from Him that was God breathed.

Paul is saying that he did not take God's truth and express them in his own human way or philosophy. Inspiration is not just the thoughts of God but the very words of God. The Bible has inspired thoughts through inspired words.

B. RECEIVED

Somebody says to me, you know, the Bible was just the opinion of man. I say look, 1 Corinthians 2, Paul said "We have received this." That means it was given to us. Look at the end of verse 12. "That we might know the things that are freely," what's the next word, "given to us of God." Where did the Bible come from? It was given by God. And what did the apostles do? They what? Received it.

Now, this is so important. This is the vehicle for carrying the revelation. The Spirit of God brings it and they received it. Now I want you to notice something. The word we in verse 12 is used a couple of times and then again in verse 13. "We received that we might know which things we speak." Please notice the word we there does not refer generally to Christians. It refers to the apostles and the Scripture writers. You and I have received these truths only from them as they recorded them. But here Paul is experiencing and writing of his own experience. "We received them from the Spirit, we that we might know what graciously was given to us which things we now speak." This is apostolic.

His truth can't be discovered by man, it can only be given by the Holy Spirit and man receives this. The us's and the we's don't refer to all Christians but to the ones who would write the Scripture.

John 14:26, 2 Tim 3:16

The Spirit used words that the human writers used but the Holy Spirit selected and arranged them exactly the way He wanted. So, the Bible is not only God's Word but also the words of God.

The Holy Spirit used common human language but the words were filled with divine content. They were filled with divine power. Thus, we have a Bible whose words are inspired.

When Paul sat down to write 1 Corinthians, the Spirit of God took control of that man. The Spirit of God went into that guy's brain, pulled out of his brain the words that were in his own vocabulary and out of his own experience and arranged them in the order that he wanted them written. The very words selected by the Holy Spirit, but selected from the life and personality of Paul so that they reflected him. Nonetheless, the words of the Spirit

C. TEACHING OF THE SPIRIT

The apostles received the wisdom they taught not from the wise men of the world, nor from their own invention but from the Spirit. The Spirit not only gave them knowledge but also utterance.

3. ILLUMINATION

2:14-16

What is divinely inspired must be humanly interpreted. But how? It takes spiritual men to understand spiritual truth. They must be illuminated.

A. WHAT IS IT?- It is like when you see something from a distance with the naked eye and then see the same thing with a telescope. It would be like being at the Grand Canyon and with the naked eye you only see masses of earth from the observation room instead of multi colored cliffs and rocks and trees in their detail that the telescope brings out. The telescope does not add anything. It discovers nothing that was not already there. However it does bring out the unseen details. Viewed under the illuminating lens of the Spirit of God, its truths stand out in bold beauty.

The page is magnified and illuminated to see what is unseen to the naked intelligence.

Another way to think of illumination is comparing common light to ultra-violet light. Let's say you have a pile of stones in a dark room and you turn on electric light on them. There would be nothing unusual. Now, if you put ultra-violet rays on them they would become amazing objects of beauty. There would be new colors and shades replacing the old drabness of the rocks. The light really added no new qualities to the rocks but certain inner qualities were caused to shine. This is an illustration of the Holy Spirit's position and action in illuminating the Bible to us. Scriptures have truth that do not respond to the light of human intelligence, but as soon as it is placed under the unseen light of the Holy Spirit, it fluoresces with a new beauty. This is what Paul is trying to get across to the Corinthians as they had relied on human wisdom, philosophy, which had no comparison to the light of Scripture being illuminated by the Holy Spirit. The Bible is not just another piece of literature. It is revelation of God that requires illumination for the reader to understand the things of God.

The mission of the church is not to change the condition of the

state but rather to produce a condition of the mind of individuals so that they can understand the ways of God and how His Word that is illuminated will change the individuals. Until the unbeliever is converted, he cannot understand the magnificent truths of the Word. One can read the Bible and memorize scripture but miss the central message. The scribes and Pharisees knew the Old Testament but did not recognize the Messiah when He walked among them. John 5:37-39. They did not accept the truth of Moses who they had placed their hope in. vv 45-47

B. NATURAL MAN

In 5:37-39 The religious leaders lived in the realm of the natural man just like everyone else who does not believe God. They have no desire to understand the spiritual nature of God's Word.

The natural man has only a natural capacity while God is spirit and His thoughts are of spiritual origin.

John 1:5 The Word of God is foolishness to a natural man.

Scripture is no way to wisdom to them

Spiritually discerned---Spiritual is the opposite of natural and refers to the spiritual capacity to grasp God's truth. The natural man cannot spiritually evaluate, spiritually discern, spiritually understand, because he is spiritually dead. He has to be made alive and have his eyes opened to understand spiritual things. John Calvin said; "hence the more insufferable the ignorance of those who imagine that the gospel is offered to mankind in common in such a way that all indiscriminately are free to embrace salvation by faith."

C. SPIRITUAL MAN

Psalms 119:18 The Psalmist knew he needed help in understanding the Word. He needed illumination. It is the spiritual man who is acquainted with the mysteries of God.

John Calvin said; "The testimony of the Spirit is superior to reason. For these words will not obtain full credit on the hearts of men until they are sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit."

Martin Luther said; "The Bible cannot be understood simply by study or talent; you must count only on the influence of the Holy Spirit. Luther also said "Man is like a pillar of salt. Like Lot's wife- like a log or a stone, he is like a lifeless statue which uses neither eyes or mouth, neither senses or heart-unless he is enlightened, converted and regenerated by the Holy Spirit."

The spiritual man, the believer, has a resident teacher to enlighten him about the truths of God. His illumination is for all Christians. Christians can appraise the Word when relying on the Giver of the Word.

1. Identity--spiritual

2. Ability---judges all things---natural and spiritual, reason and revelation

Can take the scriptures and examine them and comprehend.

Can judge between truth and error, what to shun and what to follow.

3. Immunity-judged of no man---Just human reasoning cannot judge what is truth revealed by God

Who has known the mind of the Lord? What natural man thinks God's thoughts? Unbelievers will argue with believers thinking they have

the truths of the world but they contradict scriptural teaching and are actually arguing with God, whose thoughts they have no knowledge of. Oh. When somebody says to me, you know, you need to understand something. I don't buy that stuff about Christ. I'm going to tell you my opinion. My answer is oh, well, you're going to tell God now what He should believe.

D. MIND OF CHRIST

In scripture we have the mind of Christ fully revealed to us.

We are able to understand the things of His Word because we have the mind of Christ. Christ thinks the very thoughts of God because he is God and understands God's wisdom. We have his mind or understanding.

Luke 24:45 explains this as Jesus opened their minds to understanding.

We, of course cannot understand everything, but Scripture can be understood by every Christian who is diligent in his studies and is obedient to the Lord.

If we possess the mind of Christ, why would we let ourselves be divided by the carnal minds of men? Divisions and factions are caused by carnality. If we used the mind of Christ, there would be no disunity. This is the call of Paul to the Corinthians. May that be heard by the church of