

# THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

## 1 CORINTHIANS 1-2

Often churches flatter themselves with the title, “[New Testament Church](#).” Their members are proud of the fact they go to a *NT church*... Pastors make it their goal to grow *NT believers*... and build a *NT church*...

*I use to think I wanted to be part of a New Testament church, until I read Paul’s NT letter to the Church at Corinth. The Corinthian Christians were indeed a NT church, but they were a church fraught with problems.*

*This was a church divided... (So much so, members were suing each other in the pagan courts.)*

*Blatant immorality was tolerated.*

*God-given gender roles were being ignored.*

*Communion had become an excuse for gluttony.*

*Spiritual gifts were being abused.*

*Foundational Christian truths, like the resurrection of our bodies from the dead, were being questioned...*

*And worst of all, love had taken a backseat...*

I want our church to embrace NT truths, and see NT expansion, and display NT power... *but if being a NT church means being like the Corinthians, **forget it!***

The city of Corinth was a wicked place. Among the Greeks the phrase, “[playing the Corinthian](#)” was synonymous for drunkenness... Prostitutes were called “[Corinthian girls](#)...” Corinth had a sordid reputation.

Every night in the city of Corinth 10,000 so-called “priestesses” left the temple of Aphrodite, on top of the mountain - the acropolis overlooking the city - and hit the streets and alley-ways to prostitute themselves.

The tricks they turned raised funds for their Temple.

Sexual immorality wasn't just tolerated in Corinth, it was institutionalized as part of their religion.

On his Second Missionary Journey, Paul spent 18 months in Corinth. Immigration had swelled the city to half-a-million population. And with the influx of people came every lewd and wicked practice known to man.

Yet in this *den of sin* the Holy Spirit had used Paul to build a vibrant and Spirit-filled church... It was after Paul left that problems started to develop. Rather than *the Church influencing Corinth* - *Corinth influenced the church*. Paul was now in Ephesus, when he heard of their problems - and he pens a letter of correction.

It's been said, “Boats are made to be in the water, but you don't want water in the boat.” And likewise, the church is made to be in the world as a witness - but in Corinth the world had gotten inside the church.

Verse 1 begins, “Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother...”

Acts 18 speaks of Paul's time in Corinth. When he arrived he held meetings in the Jewish synagogue. The leader of the Jews was a man named Crispus, and he was converted to Christianity.

Crispus was replaced by Sosthenes who was determined to stir up trouble for Paul and the church.

Sosthenes brought Paul before the city counsel on grounds of sedition, *but his plot backfired*. The proconsul realized this was a religious matter and outside his jurisdiction. He dismissed the charges.

The civil leaders were so upset with Sosthenes for wasting their time, and using them to vent his hatred, they had Sosthenes beaten instead of Paul.

Now look at how Paul addresses the Corinthian church... He writes with *"Sosthenes our brother."*

Apparently Sosthenes had concluded, *"if you can't beat them, join them."* The Jews in Corinth were having a hard time keeping a leader in charge of the synagogue. The rabbis were all converting to Christ.

Paul and Sosthenes write *"to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:"* Over the centuries of Church history, people have applied the term *"saint"* to elite, special believers who demonstrate extraordinary acts of faith.

But originally every believer in Jesus was called a *"saint."* The word means *"set apart"* or *"dedicated."*

Once, two brothers stole a neighbor's sheep. They were caught and punished. They were both branded on the forehead with the letters *"ST"* for *"sheep thief."*

One brother was so embarrassed he fled town to hide his mark of shame. The other brother took responsibility for his crimes, and despite the stigma, stayed in the community to rebuild a good reputation.

Years later a town newcomer noticed “ST” on the man’s forehead. He asked a local what it meant. The fellow replied, “I’m not sure, but I think it means ‘saint’.”

All of us should live so that we’re known as a saint.

Paul writes to the saints in Corinth - but also to those who are “*in every place.*” Which even includes Lilburn, and Stone Mountain, and Snellville... “*in every place.*”

Verse 3, “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Grace and peace are called “*the twins of the NT.*” They go together.

They remind me of the **Minnesota Twins.**

The baseball team is named after the twin cities, Minneapolis and St. Paul, located on either side of the Mississippi River. And spiritually speaking, here are two twin cities that sit side-by-side - *grace and peace.*

Enter God’s grace and you’ll know His peace!

Grace extends to us a right standing with God. Peace is the byproduct. You can’t have peace without grace. It’s God’s grace that ushers us into His peace.

Paul continues his greeting in verse 4, “I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the

testimony of Christ was confirmed in you...” I love Paul’s phrase, they were “*enriched in everything...*” This is what Jesus does for us. He enriches and enhances. He not only takes away our sin, but adds to our lives. He fills us with good stuff.

“So that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ...” God blessed this church with a wide array of spiritual gifts. We’ll talk about them in detail later in the book: gifts of healings, words of wisdom, discernment, unknown tongues, etc.

And Paul says it was through spiritual gifts that “*the testimony of Christ was confirmed...*” Think of it this way, the atmosphere always contains a degree of moisture, but we realize it most when it rains. And likewise, Jesus is always among us, but His presence is “*confirmed*” when we experience spiritual gifts.

Later in this book we’ll learn the Corinthians were *misusing and abusing* spiritual gifts, but never does Paul suggest they stop *using* them. The presence of spiritual gifts were viewed as “*the testimony of Christ.*”

Verse 8 speaks of Jesus second coming... “*who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*” Notice the reason we were called by God... the reason God has saved us by His grace is so that we can have “*fellowship with His Son.*”

Christians do good works - and we serve - and we grow... but those aren't the reasons we're saved. We're saved to have fellowship with God and His Son Jesus.

In verse 10 Paul tackles the church's first problem.

“Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you, but *that* you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” The Corinthians had become fragmented. The church lacked unity and harmony.

“For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's *household*, that there are contentions among you.” A sister in Christ, *Chloe*, wrote to Paul, and told him of the cliques that had formed in the church. There were tribes within the tribe.

Realize, it's okay to have a circle of friends at church, as long as it's not a closed circle. Our emphasis should be on bringing people in, not keeping people out. When it's “**us versus them**” its deadly.

Problems occur when church members polarize. One group thinks they're better, or more spiritual, than another. The family of God becomes a family feud.

Certainly, there are issues worth fighting for - and on those issues I'll lead the charge. But all too often churches end up **majoring on the minors and minoring on the majors**. We fight over petty, picky, piddly stuff...

*Christians divide over baptism, do we dunk or sprinkle?... do we take communion weekly or once a quarter?... do we*

*read from the King James or a newer translation?... sing hymns or praise songs?... use a steel pulpit or one made of wood?... it's trivial stuff.*

I read the story of Paul Loetz. Paul took a terrible fall. He punctured a lung, broke a few ribs, was bleeding internally. He was rushed to the hospital.

While lying in the emergency room, Paul heard two doctors arguing over who would put the tube into his crushed chest. The argument became a shoving match. One doctor threatened to have the security guards remove the other doctor... Finally, Paul managed to cry out, "Please, somebody, save me!" Two other doctors had to step in and settle the dispute.

And this can happen in a church. God brings hurting people through our doors, but we're too busy trying to out-do, or upstage each other, to provide them help.

That's what was occurring in the church at Corinth.

Verse 12, "Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." The church had divided around celebrity preachers. They gravitated toward teachers.

One group shouted, "Paul is cool - we're into Paul, he preaches liberty. You guys are all legalists."

The second splinter disagreed, "We like Apollos, he unlocks deep truths. We're more intelligent than you."

A third segment countered, "We follow Cephas, ole Pentecost Pete. You can study the Bible, we'll just flow in the power of the Holy Spirit..." And the final schism thumbed their

nose at the rest, "Who needs a human teacher. We take our orders from Jesus alone."

But Paul writes, "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" The answer to all the above questions is "no."

The church is **the body of Christ**. Jesus died for us. We're baptized into Him. The main thing is Jesus, and we should always keep **the main thing the main thing**.

Once I read the story of a man who killed his wife, and ran her body through a wood chipper to destroy the evidence. As repulsive as that sounds, this is what the Corinthians had done to the body of Christ. Their divisiveness had put the church through the chipper.

It's sad when the church fractures into cliques that think they're right and everyone else is wrong. In Corinth the pride of its members attached to celebrity preachers. Some were "*of Paul*" - others "*of Apollos*."

Pastors and Bible teachers are given by God to point us to Jesus, not to become a point of division. Jesus is our one rallying point. He is the commonality greater than all our differences. Jesus Christ is our unity.

I love the quote by Edwin Markham, "He drew a circle that shut me out. Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout. But love and I had the will to win. We drew a circle that took him in." Let's seek harmony in the Body of Christ.

Verse 14, "I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, lest anyone should say that I had



baptized in my own name. Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other.” Here’s a verse that gives me hope! Paul confesses he couldn’t remember who he’d baptized. He’d lost track. It’s embarrassing when I ask a person if they’ve ever been baptized, and they reply, *“Pastor Sandy, you’re the one who baptized me.”*

While in Corinth, Paul baptized only a couple of believers. *Apparently, he suspected what might happen. He’d guarded against divisions over baptism.*

He writes in verse 17, *“For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel...”* This is interesting, Paul distinguishes between baptism and the Gospel. Obviously, in his mind, they were separate issues.

This is important since there are Christian denominations today, like the Church of Christ, that teach the necessity of water baptism for salvation.

Yet if this were true, it’s hard to imagine Paul being so cavalier and nonchalant about the subject.

He says, *“I didn’t baptize any of you...” “I came to preach the Gospel, not baptize...”* John 4:1-2 tells us that not even Jesus baptized folks. His disciples handled the duties. Baptism is our response to the Gospel - but it’s not included as part of the Gospel. *The rite of baptism is important, but it is not essential.*

Paul preached the Gospel, and *“not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.”* Paul’s

teaching wasn't full of *abstract theories*, or *philosophical ideas*, or *academic arguments*.

He heralded the cross of Christ.

Paul declared a brutal reality. When the Corinthians heard him speak of *"the cross"* there would've been an initial resistance - a repulsion. Roman crosses were bloody and barbaric. Crucifixion was rated "R" for violence. The cross was indeed, a harsh message.

Paul says he didn't try to soften the blow. Rather He proclaimed Christ crucified - *this is what sin deserved* and *this is what the love of God willingly suffered to save us*. Paul allowed the message of the cross to punch us right in the nose of our refined sensibilities.

Verse 18, *"For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."* The Jews were impressed with power - the Greeks with philosophy.

And the cross was an affront to both.

That the Almighty God would subject Himself to death appears foolish - even weak in the eyes of man.

God went out of His way to save us in a way that insults the sources of our pride - *strength and wisdom*.

*"For it is written* (and here Paul quotes Isaiah 29:14): *"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."*

*Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through*

wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.”

In essence, God packaged His glorious salvation in a brown paper sack. Rather than appeal to human tastes, the cross mocks our values. It seems like a mistake, a defeat. That God would die appears foolish and weak. This is not the salvation man would've purposed. The Greeks valued wisdom. The Jewish heroes showed strength. The cross appeals to neither.

The cross seems foolish not wise, and weak not strong. God worked in a way that contradicted human values. The cross forces us all to humble ourselves - and to come to God on His terms, not our own.

Verse 22, “For Jews request a sign and Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” The Jews were attracted to power - Greeks were impressed with wisdom. “*Christ crucified*” appealed to neither!

To the Jews a *martyred Messiah* was a “**stumbling block.**” The Greek word was “*scandalon*” or “*scandal.*”

The cross was sheer scandalous to the Jews, almost blasphemous - to think God was nailed to a cross.

If salvation had come through an act of strength, and valor, and courage the Jews would've been saved.

If salvation was due to an academic achievement the Greeks would've been saved. They were into wisdom.

But the cross of Christ was and is all about sacrifice, and love, and faith. It's about God doing for mankind what we could never do for ourselves. Salvation comes to humble hearts that put their simple trust in God.

**“Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”**

The cross is God's secret weapon. Brains and brawn and beauty bow before God at the cross. He chose to save us in a way that defied all three. To mankind the cross was foolish, and weak, and utterly shameful.

Once, a seminary, founded by godly men, had a stone arch over its entrance. It was engraved with the words, **“We Preach Christ Crucified.”** In time ivy grew up over the arch, until the greenery covered the word **“Crucified...”** The arch read, **“We preach Christ.”**

Over the years the ivy kept growing, until it covered, **“Christ.”** Today the arch simply reads, **“We preach.”**

And this is what's happened to the modern church. We've gone from preaching **Christ crucified** to just preaching. We've lost our confidence in the cross, and thus we've lost the power and wisdom of God.

Somewhere along the way the church chose to sanitize Christianity. Clean up the blood and gore. Make Christianity more palatable to human tastes.

We moved away from the cross of Christ and emphasized Jesus' good works and wise teachings.

But it didn't take long for Jesus' parables and miracles to become controversial, so now the church just preaches. They tell cute stories and anecdotes.

This is why today's Christianity lacks power. We've forgotten the foolishness of God is wiser than men.

The cross mocks our values, and attacks our pride, *and so does the church*. The church consists of folks whom God has called out of the world, but rather than choose the rich and famous, God has filled His church with nobodies. And as proof, Paul points to the Corinthian believers... Verse 26, "For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."

The Queen of England was once asked how she was converted to Christ. She replied, "by an 'm'." When asked what she meant, she said, "I'm thankful God said 'Not many noble,' rather than 'not any noble'."

Verse 27, "But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are..." God chooses the simple not the smart - the weak not the strong - the humble not the noble - *and why?* The answer is in verse 29, "that no flesh should glory in His presence." All the glory goes to God. His salvation is of mercy, not merit.

Today, people still admire **wisdom**, and **power**, and **privilege**. That's why God chooses **the cross**; for it's an affront to all

three. And this why He's chosen **the church!** For the type of people God chooses also baffles our reasons - and undermines our notions of power - and turns upside down our concepts of rank.

God chooses, not the smart, but the simple - not the mighty, but the frail - not the upper-crust, but the down-and-out. He wants to make sure that every knee bows before Him, and **“no flesh glories in His presence.”**

You could say, that **our great God uses *the bottom of the barrel to show that He's on top of the world!***

Verse 30, **“But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God - and righteousness and sanctification and redemption - that, as it is written, *“He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.”***

Here he quotes Jeremiah 9 Jesus is our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification, our redemption!

Jeremiah 9:23-24 state, **“Thus says the Lord: *“Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord...”***

All that we are, and do, and ever hope to be is because of our Lord Jesus. ***To Christ be the glory!***

Chapter 2 continues, **“And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God.”**

Notice, Paul stays consistent with his theme... God makes choices and works in ways that deliberately mock our pride and force us to humble ourselves.

He's talked about the **cross**... the **church**... now he turns to the **courier** himself. Paul speaks of his ministry as an example of how God works in ways contrary to human **smarts**, and **strength**, and **status**.

In Chapter 2 Paul describes the methods of his own ministry... How he relied on *simplicity of speech* and the *power of the Holy Spirit* in sharing the Gospel.

Once a church had a painting of the crucifixion right behind the pulpit. The pastor was a big man and would block its view. One Sunday, the pastor was absent.

In reference to the pastor a child asked his mother, "**Where's the guy who stands so we can't see Jesus?**"

Paul always tried to avoid that being said of him.

Rather than rely on his oratory skill or keen insights Paul's goal was to point folks to Jesus. A pastor's worse mistake is to use the pulpit for self-promotion, or to show-off. Don't ever block anyone's view of Jesus.

Verse 2, "**For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.**"

As they say, "**Timing is everything.**" Here, the timing of Paul's writing may help us with its interpretation...

Paul came to Corinth immediately after his visit to Mars Hill in Athens. There he tried to reason with the philosophers, but with little success. He could've come to Corinth with a

different strategy. Rather than argue philosophy he proclaimed the power of *Christ crucified*.

He writes on, “I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power...” Paul didn’t rely on his eloquence or intelligence. In fact, he made a point of being plain!

He preached *Christ crucified* not *himself amplified*.

Yet miracles flowed from this trembling little specimen of a man. It was obvious to everyone who saw him that Paul's power came from the Spirit of God.

Helena Modjeska was a famous actress at the turn of the 20th century. Once at a party she was asked to perform. She presented an amazing oratory in her native Polish tongue. The crowd was riveted to every word. Her presentation was powerful, and emotion-packed, and soul-stirring... It was later revealed that all Modjeska had done was recite the Polish alphabet.

There are preachers who impress with their Polish, but they don't really say anything! They can say “*nothing*” better than you've ever heard it said before!

Paul had waxed eloquent among the Athenians - and it got him nowhere. I'm not saying he made a mistake in Athens. There is a time and a place for philosophical argument, but Athens had taught Paul a lesson.

At the crux of a person's salvation is Christ crucified!



A person can have all his intellectual questions answered, but without facing the cross of Jesus he remains unmoved... On the other hand, a doubter can come full of skepticism, and be shaken to his or her core by the power of the cross. *The crux is the cross!*

This is what we need to emphasize in our sharing!

When Paul came to Corinth he was *weak physically*, and he was *drained emotionally*. Constant opposition had rattled him. *Fear* was threatening his *faith*.

But in Acts 18:9-10, while in Corinth, God came to his rescue. God spoke directly to Paul in a night vision to encourage him, and assure him of His protection.

In Corinth, Paul didn't come across powerfully and persuasively - he preached the simple Gospel - and it was the Holy Spirit who demonstrate *His* power.

Paul reminded the Corinthians of his style - and its purpose in verse 5... **“That your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.”** Paul grew weary of the wisdom spouted by this world. He learned to trust in God's power, over human wisdom. Man's wisdom surely comes to nothing. It fades and ultimately fails.

**“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”** God's

wisdom has never been conventional thought. Men don't think God's thoughts.

God's wisdom is a mystery to man's mind... **Strength through weakness, wisdom through foolishness, life through death, victory through defeat has never been a theme of man's wisdom.** The paradox of the cross is illogical to man. It's a mystery hidden from man's mind.

That mankind knew nothing of God's wisdom became apparent the day the Jewish scholars called out for Jesus' blood, and ordered His execution.

Verse 9 quotes from Isaiah 64. **"But as it is written: *Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*"** Usually you hear this verse at funerals where its applied to the wonders of heaven... ***eye has not seen...*** And heaven will be wonderful. But this verse also speaks of life right now!

God loves to surprise us with His wisdom!

He has blessings prepared for us, but they can only be discerned by His Spirit! What you've experienced to this point in life pales in comparison to the things God has for you just around the corner... if we walk by faith.

For it is through His Spirit that God conveys His blessings, verse 10, **"But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God."** Imagine this, God is broadcasting amazing things for your spiritual eyes to see, but you've got to be tuned to the right channel.

If your thinking is stuck on material concerns - if you think merely on a physical level - you'll miss out on the truths of God's Spirit. We need to be spiritually minded.

“For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.”

Realize, **God is known on the spiritual level.**

Tonight, your body language and facial impressions might communicate an interest in what I'm saying, but your mind could be focused on tonight's episode of Survivor. Only the *spirit of man* knows the *mind of man*.

Likewise, only the Spirit of God knows the mind of God. This is why if I want to know God I need to cultivate a friendship with God's Spirit. The mysteries of God are hidden from *the mighty*, but are available to *minions like us*, through *the ministry of God's Spirit*.

Verse 12, “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.” Ever had an urge to pause and pray for a friend? Or you were compelled to go out of your way to speak to a stranger? These kinds of inner urges can come from God's Spirit. We have received God's Holy Spirit.

And we can expect His Spirit to be active in us. God has blessings for us and others that are freely given.

One of the tremendous thrills of the Christian life is to be on the receiving end of a divine communiqué...

At first you're scared. You feel a bit foolish. You're not completely sure what you're feeling is from God - but you step out in faith, and act on the impulse, and suddenly you see God's hand at work... When this begins to happen, your life becomes an adventure!

Verse 13, “These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

Here’s how you learn to recognize the voice of God’s Spirit - by “*comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*”

You compare the inner urge you’re feeling with the nature of Jesus that you’re learning - *is this something the Lord would do?* If so, it’s probably from the Lord.

You compare the still small voice you’re hearing, with the Bible you’re reading - *are the two compatible?* The Spirit authored the Scriptures. They won’t contradict.

You compare what you’re sensing spiritually with your spiritual gift or calling - *does what the Spirit say harmonize with where God has already guided?*

And you can compare the prompting you sense with the spiritual priorities God has given you - *do they fit?*

We learn to identify these *spiritual subjectives* by scrutinizing them up against our *spiritual objectives!*

We know that God never contradicts Himself.

Thus, if your inner prompting doesn’t reflect Jesus, or if it contradicts His Word; then it’s not from God.

“But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.” Paul’s been talking about the **spiritual man**. This is the person in tune with God’s Spirit...

But the **natural man** is limited. He or she lacks the Spirit. The *mind of man* unaided by God’s Spirit can’t explore the *things of God*. The natural man is deaf to spiritual communiqués. He or she is earthbound in their deliberations - they’re limited to their five senses.

A whole spiritual dimension is closed off to him.

“But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is *rightly* judged by no one.” Since the spiritual man has access to resources unavailable to the natural man - he or she will be doubted and misunderstood.

This is why it’s frustrating to share what God is doing in your heart with a lost friend or spouse who doesn’t know Jesus. It doesn’t compute in them. They’re not privy to the info and sensitivities available to you...

Verse 16 “For *“who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?”* But we have the mind of Christ.” The Phillips translation renders verse 16, “Who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?” Incredible as it may sound, we who are spiritual have the very thoughts of Christ!” *What a concept!*

**We have the very thoughts of Christ!**

Don't think you ever have to turn off your mind, and enter a trance-like state to communicate with God's Spirit. That's not usually how God works. God gives us a mind; then His Spirit enlightens our intellect.

Through the Holy Spirit our minds become exposed to God's thoughts - we can see life from heaven's perspective, and tackle problems with God's wisdom.

Can you dream of a bigger blessing, "*we have the mind of Christ.*" The unbeliever has lost his mind. He's not in his right mind. But we have the mind of Christ!

Paul is discussing three types of people...

The **natural man** - who doesn't know God at all.

There's also the **spiritual man** - who's in contact with God's Spirit... He *lives in* and is *led by* the Holy Spirit.

And in Chapter 3 Paul also bring up the **carnal man**. He's the man or woman who knows God, yet lives as if he doesn't. We'll study *the carnal person* next week...