

Sunday, November 15, 2015—I Corinthians 2:9-12: The Things of God Knoweth No Man

Introduction/Review

- Last week during our time together we considered verse 8, the last verse in this trilogy of verses dealing with the mystery that started in verse 6.
- The wisdom of “the princes of this world” first introduced in verse 6, did not know “the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom” in verse 7. To be clear, the principalities and powers in heavenly places, the rulers of the darkness of this world were not able, via their own wisdom, to know what God in his wisdom had kept secret.
- According to verse 8, acting in accordance with their own wisdom and with complete ignorance of what God kept secret, “the princes of this world” brought about an event namely, the crucifixion of Christ that spoiled all their best laid plans. If “the princes of this world” had known about the “wisdom of God in a mystery” they never would have crucified Christ.
- I Corinthians 2:7-8—God secured his ultimate victory by keeping a secret about what he intended to do from before the foundation of the world in forming the body of Christ on the basis of the cross work his Son. Not knowing the wisdom that God chose to keep hidden in Himself, the princes of the world bring about the pivotal event of history completely ignorant of its full impact. Had they known about the wisdom of God in a mystery they never would have “crucified the Lord of glory.”
- Ephesians 3:9-11—today in this dispensation of grace, God wants all men to know the fellowship of the mystery and be involved in educating the principalities and powers in heavenly places about the manifold wisdom of God.
 - Use map illustration.
- With this trilogy of verses regarding the mystery firmly fixed in our frame of reference we are now ready to move on with our exposition of chapter 2.

I Corinthians 2:9

- **But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.**
- *But as it is written*—Paul follows up his discussion of “the wisdom of God in a mystery” in verses 7 and 8 with a contrast “but” and an allusion to the Old Testament “as it is written.”
 - Isaiah 64:4

- In seeking to understand verse 9, let us not forget that in verse 6 Paul also addressed “the wisdom of this world.” With respect to “the wisdom of God in a mystery,” just as it was beyond the capacity for “the princes of this world” to grasp what “God ordained unto our glory” but didn’t tell anyone about, it is equally beyond the ability of man’s own wisdom to comprehend the glory of what God has prepared for the body of Christ.
- Paul is saying that the glory that God ordained and prepared for the body of Christ is beyond anything that we have ever seen with our eyes, heard with our ears, or conceived in your hearts. This is glory that cannot be known through the normal function of man’s reasoning faculties.

I Corinthians 2:10

- **But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.**
- *But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit*—once again note the contrast with the previous verse. Those things that man was utterly incapable of knowing via his own wisdom have been revealed and made known unto us by the Spirit of God.
- Note the past tense on the verb “hath revealed.” In the Greek text supporting the King James Bible this verb is in the Aorist Tense and the Indicative Mood which indicates a punctiliar action (action that happens at a specific point in time) in the past. In other words, at point in time prior to the writing of I Corinthians, the Spirit of God revealed or made known this information that could have never been known otherwise.
- The English word “revealed” means “disclosed; discovered; made known; laid open,” according to *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary*. *Strong’s Concordance* defines the underlying Greek word as 1) to uncover, lay open what has been veiled or covered up, and 2) to make known, make manifest, disclose what before was unknown.
 - Ephesians 3:5
- So God at a point in time in the past revealed that which was before unknown, through the instrumentality of the Spirit of God. God the Father moved to reveal or disclose the information, whereas God the Holy Spirit is the active agent whereby the information was disclosed.
- *for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God*—note the present tense on this activity of God the Holy Spirit, He “searcheth all things.” The Greek word translated “searcheth” here appears 6 times in the Greek text supporting the King James Bible and is variously translated as search 2 times, searcheth 3 times, and searching 1 time.
- *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary* defines the relevant English words as follows:

- Search—“To look over or through for the purpose of finding something; to explore; to examine by inspection; as, to *search* the house for a book; to *search* the wood for a thief.”
- Searching—“Looking into or over; exploring; examining; inquiring; seeking; investigating.”
- God the Holy Spirit, in the present, is actively searching all things.
- *Yea*—as we saw when we studied I Corinthians 1:28, the English word “yea” serves various linguistic functions. One of which is simply to give affirmation or assent i.e., yes. “It sometimes introduces a subject, with the sense of indeed, verily, truly, it is so (Gen. 3:1).” According to the dictionary “yea” can also enforce the sense of something preceding it i.e., “not only so, but more (Phl. 1:18).” (*Webster’s 1828 Dictionary*)
- I Corinthians 2:10—in this verse the word “yea” is serving the third function of enforcing the sense of something preceding it. In His ministry of searching “all things” the Holy Spirit searches even “the deep things of God.”
- Only the Spirit of God that is capable of searching the “deep things of God” can reveal, uncover, and make known the glory that God has prepared for those who love him.
- This is why Paul only spoke this “wisdom among them that are perfect” in perfect in verse 6. Because when he got into telling folks about “the wisdom of God in a mystery” in verse 7 he was making known “the deep things of God” in verse 10. Today, in the dispensation of grace, God through his Spirit is in business of making known the “deep things of God.”

I Corinthians 2:11

- **For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.**
- The first part of this verse is rhetorical. Only the spirit of a given man knows what goes on in his own mind.
- *Even so*—likewise, or in the same manner, only the Spirit of God knows the things of God. So the only hope we creatures of dirt have of knowing the things of God is via the revealing/teaching ministry of God the Holy Spirit.

I Corinthians 2:12

- **Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.**

- *Now we have received*—note the past tense on the verb “have received.” Once again this is speaking about an action that was accomplished at a specific point of time in the past.
- *not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God*—what did we receive at a particular point of time in the past? The “spirit which is of God.” Paul is speaking here about the spirit who is of God or has God as its source i.e., the very Spirit of God.
 - Ephesians 2:2—this is the spirit that we have not received in I Cor. 2:12.
- *that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God*—why were we given the spirit which is of God at a particular point of time in the past? That (purpose and intent) “we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.”
- *Might know*—indicates some doubt. The doubt here is not about whether or not the believer has received “the spirit which is of God” but whether or not the believer will take advantage of what has been given to them. All believers have been given the capacity to know these things but the sad reality is that no all believers chose to utilize what has been given to them.
- *Are freely given to us of God*—notice that there is no doubt about what God has freely given us.
- We received “the spirit which is of God” in verse 12 for the purpose and intent of knowing “the things freely given us of God.” In other words, we cannot know these things in any other way. In addition, just because someone does not know about them does not mean that they did not receive them.
- In the context, “the things freely given of God” in verse 12, relates to “the deep things of God” in verse 10, which corresponds with “the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom” in verse 7, which constitutes the wisdom Paul was speaking among the perfect in verse 6.
- None of this information could have been known by mankind apart God revealing it “by his Spirit” in verse 10 and giving believers “the spirit which is of God” in verse 12 so that they could know it.
- In verse 10 we see how “the wisdom of God in a mystery” was revealed by the Spirit of God to the Apostle Paul. In verse 12 we observe that the same Spirit enables all believers to know the truth He revealed via Paul, i.e., the Spirit gives insight into that which He has revealed.