

The Wisdom Of God

1 Corinthians 2:1-13

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Good evening. Let's open our Bibles to 1 Corinthians chapter 2. We finally get to the second chapter. And we're going to look at verses 1 to 13. The title of my study tonight is The Wisdom of God. We actually continue and finish and kind of wrap up tonight this little section on The Wisdom of God. Paul started it last week. We looked at it. Tonight, we're going to finish it up as it pertains to Paul's preaching, Paul's teaching, and the work of the Holy Spirit. So, I want you to follow along with me very closely with your Bibles. And let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to be our teacher tonight and to show us the things of Christ.

Father, we bow our hearts before You in Your Word. We pray that tonight as we have gathered to open the Bible and the study to learn of You that the Spirit of God would speak through what He has spoken. We pray that we would learn and grow and be changed and transformed by the power of Your Word. I would thank You for what You're doing in this church and our lives. And Lord, we pray that You again would speak now in Jesus' name and everyone agreeing said, Amen.

One of the problems in the church at Corinth was the love of worldly wisdom and philosophy. They were a Greek city and they had kind of devoted themselves to knowledge. But we're going to learn tonight that the wisdom of the world, as we learn, is foolishness with God. And that the wisdom of God is found in the Word of God. And so, there was division in the church at Corinth because they were leaning on man's wisdom, human wisdom, rather than the wisdom of God. Paul wanted them to understand that there's a need for divine wisdom which is communicated to men only by the Spirit of God through the Word of God. Now I know you've heard me say this many times and you'll hear me say it many times more. If you want to know the wisdom of God, you open your Bible, right? Your B-I-B-L-E. We used to sing that's the book for me. If you want the wisdom of God, this right here is fool's wisdom. The world says it's foolishness, but this is the wisdom of God. And we're going to see about that tonight in this marvelous text. Paul describes the nature of God's wisdom in three basic areas.

If you're taking notes, you can write them down three main areas and there'll be some sub points. But the first is in verses 1-5, God's wisdom is seen in Paul's preaching. Now I may not be speaking tonight to preachers, but we are all to share the gospel. And so even though you may not formally preach in a pulpit, we are to share the gospel. If I am speaking to any preachers, then there's some important points about God's wisdom in preaching tonight.

Notice verses 1-5. Paul says verse 1, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, I came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom declaring unto you the testimony of God."

Paul is referring to his preaching there in the city of Corinth. "For I determined..., verse 2, ...not to know anything among you, save or except for Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not

with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and in power. The reason is, "that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

Now I want you to notice there in verse 1, Paul says, "when I came to you." Now Paul is talking about his first entrance into the city of Corinth in the second missionary journey. On his second missionary journey, he came from Athens, went to Corinth, and when he came to them, he was preaching. And when he was preaching, he wasn't preaching the wisdom of the world, he was preaching the wisdom of God. And so, Paul wanted them to understand that this gospel he preached is God's wisdom, the Word, and that through that they were converted and that they were saved. Now I want you to note five things about Paul's preaching in the city of Corinth.

First of all, his method, it's there in verse 1. His method was that he didn't preach with excellency of speech, or of wisdom. That's man's wisdom declaring unto you the testimony of God. So, this is the negative, what it was not. Paul's preaching, which by the way was apostolic preaching, he was an apostle, was not with the wisdom of words. Now there's a theory in underlying the word theory. And I don't know whether or not I buy it, but I find it interesting or I wouldn't even bother you with it. And that theory is, is that when Paul had preached in Athens, if you study the sermon of Paul in Athens, he preached on Mars Hill. (I had the privilege of being in Athens and getting up on Mars Hill and we had a Bible study from the book of Acts upon Mars Hill. It was just such an awesome time). But when Paul was on Mars Hill in Athens, he spoke to philosophers. They were two groups of philosophers known as Epicureans and the Stoics. Epicureans, you know, the chief good of life is pleasure and the Stoics that they deny themselves of pleasure. There are two different schools. Now if you read Paul's sermon, and we don't know that it was all recorded for us in the book of Acts. It, unlike other sermons of Paul, it didn't center on Christ and the cross. It did not center on Christ and the cross. Now we know he was speaking to Greek philosophers, but the cross is the wisdom of God. That's where the power of God is. And there was what seemed to be little results in Paul's preaching in Athens.

So, here's the theory. The theory is that after being in Athens and preaching kind of trying to, you know, identify with the philosophers that he determined. Next city I get to, no more philosophy, no more coolness, no more trying to relate, no more trying to be a hip preacher, you know, and connect with my culture. I am preaching the Cross of Jesus Christ. Now again, I'm a little hesitant to buy in that theory because I don't want to criticize Paul. I don't want to, when I get to heaven, say, hey are you John Miller? Come here, I want to talk to you for a minute. There's going to be a lot of preachers that are going to have to ask Peter to forgive them when they get a lot of Peter bashing in the pulpit. Peter's going to have a big thing set up, you know, all preachers come here and talk to me, you know. But I do know by experience, I remember when I was just getting started as a pastor preaching, I got invited to preach at a university at Cal State San Bernardino, and I was asked to go out and speak there, and I'm going to be speaking to a bunch of intellectuals. I'm just a young punk kid, I'm just a young preacher. So, I was intimidated, I was freaked out, I was a little scared. So, I spent hours studying, you know, philosophy and science and evolution and all these things. I'm going to razzle-dazzle, you know, I'm really going to be awesome, you know. And I remember going in there and falling flat on my face. And I determined, I actually had the same experience. I determined from that time out, I'm

a preacher of the gospel. And when I have an opportunity to preach intellectual, doesn't matter where I go, I got one message. And that message is the Cross of Jesus Christ. And that's what I'm going to preach. And I'm not going to worry about whether they're impressed with my intellect, because there isn't a lot there to impress people. I'm just going to preach the cross, and we need to do the same. You can't argue anyone into the Kingdom of God. If you could argue them in, they can be argued out. It has to be the Holy Spirit that convinces them, and they have to be truly born again or converted and brought in to the Kingdom of God. So, Paul says, my method in verse 1, it wasn't using excellent speech or wisdom. Remember, there were those who were at the school of, they loved preaching of Apollos. Apollos was believed to be a very eloquent orator. And then he spoke eloquently and powerfully and intellectually. And people can be drawn to that. They can be drawn to the style of a man's oratory skill and ability as opposed to the content. And it's actually believed that when Paul taught, he wasn't eloquent in his speaking. But his content was amazing. And I think one of the detriments or one of the setbacks of the church today is that we focus on personality and we focus on talent and ability in the pulpit as opposed to truth, content. And the truth and content trumps personality or oratory ability. If God's called someone to preach, hopefully they have an ability to communicate and not bore people to death. But on the other hand, it's not a show. It's not entertainment. It's not for you, you know, razzamadazz. It's for the truth of God's Word for which a man of God preaches the Word of God. So, he said, I didn't use eloquent speech or man's wisdom.

Some preachers like to use big words to impress people. Remember one time I went and asked my wife, I go, what does this word mean? She goes, if you don't know what it means, don't use it. Good advice. Okay, good. I went back in my study, closed the door, you know. It's like, if I don't know what it means, who else is going to know what it means? Why use it? And I'm thinking, the reason I wanted to use it because then people would think I'm intellectual. They would go, my, isn't John smart? Look at that big word, you know. And they come up, what does that word mean? I don't know, but isn't it impressive? You know, I mean, if it gets in the way of what you're trying to say, why use big words? Paul recognized the difference between ministry that is soulish and now which is spiritual. There are a lot of preachers that move people's emotions. They're eloquent speakers. I've listened to some of them on television. Eloquent speakers, powerful speakers, moving speakers. And the whole time I'm listening to them, I'm going, man, this guy's good. Too bad everything he says is false. I mean, he's not saying anything that's true or that's what the Bible really says. People are all excited. It's like a high school rally. They're all excited, you know. And they're moved and, well, that wasn't that awesome. But there's no real content to what they're saying.

So, number one, Paul preached simply. Paul preached simply. And then secondly, we see his message in verse 2, for I determined, and that's a thoughtful, intelligent commitment.

I determined not to know anything among you except for Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Now, Paul wasn't talking generally. He was talking specifically about his preaching. When you talked to Paul, you say, "Paul, isn't it a nice day?" "I don't talk about the weather. Let's talk about Jesus." That isn't what he meant. He meant, in my preaching, I determined not to know anything among you except for Jesus Christ and Him crucified. What an awesome thing that is. Paul's

preaching was to focus on the person and the work of Christ. And any minister worth his salt will do the same. His preaching will always connect people to Christ. It will always have Christ central and will be cross centered. If we preach other things, then it won't really help man. So, no human wisdom in his method, in his message as well, centered on the cross. So secondly, write this down. Paul's preaching was exclusively person of Christ and the work of Christ. So, he preached simply, he preached exclusively the person of Jesus Christ.

I heard the true story about a young pastor that went away to preach at a church. His church was made up of college professors and university students. So, he was intimidated by that. He tried to preach on history and he tried to preach on science and he tried to preach on philosophy. It just wasn't flying. He didn't know what to do. He wasn't very good at that. So, he went to get some counsel from his dad who was a pastor. He said, Dad, I got all these professors and university students and intellectuals in my church and I tried preaching on science and I tried preaching on history and I tried preaching on philosophy. It just doesn't seem to work. He says, they all know more than I know. They know more about these areas. They're more intelligent in these areas than I am. His wise father looked at him and said, "Son, why don't you preach the Cross and Jesus Christ? They probably don't know much about that." Yeah, great idea. So, he went back and with New Vigor began to preach Christ and Him crucified. Paul preached exclusively.

And then thirdly, notice his manner, his method, verse 1. His message is in verse 2 and his manner is in verse 3. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. Now this is amazing. A lot of pastors will not share or have any self-disclosure about a weakness. They want to come off as powerful and dynamic and authoritatively and they're unwilling to admit. I was weak. I was physically weak. Now I think the weakness there is physical. Paul says, when I came to you at Corinth, I was weak in my body. And he says, I came to you in fear and that blows my mind. Paul the apostle admitting fear, some people have a negative confession. You shouldn't say something negative. Paul is just being honest. There's something to be said for humility in the pulpit. I don't think it should be a phony or put on or showy humility. I think it should be genuine. And I don't think a preacher should preach about himself or talk about himself. But on the other hand, Paul is talking about, look, when I preach, I came in weak. And I came in fear. And what Paul learned is what we all have to learn too, is that when we are weak and we trust the Lord, then we find His strength. Amen? 2 Corinthians chapter 12, Paul said, "for when I am weak, then am I strong?" I don't know that I ever get up to preach or teach or anything, but what I pray and say, Lord, I need Your strength. I need Your wisdom. I need Your help to communicate Your truth. Without You and without the Holy Spirit, I am nothing. And Paul was willing to admit that, his manner was humble. His manner was humble.

So, Paul's preaching was simple. It was exclusive. And it was humble. He preached humbly, weakness and in fear and in much trembling. J.B. Phillips translates that I was feeling far from strong and I was nervous and rather shaky. That's Paul the Apostle talking about his manner in the pulpit when he preached.

Notice fourthly verse 4, his means. In verse 4 he says, "my speech and my preaching were not

with enticing words of man's wisdom. But it was in demonstration of the Spirit and in power." So, Paul preached in verse 4 and he said that it was not with enticing words. In verse 1 it wasn't with the excellency of speech or wisdom. Now in verse 4, I didn't use enticing words. I didn't use man's wisdom. But the key of the universe 4 is that it had the demonstration of the Spirit and in power. And that is the power of the Holy Spirit to change lives. God can take a weak, frail, fearful man or woman who preaches the truth of God's Word or shares the truth of God's Word. And the Holy Spirit can use that to change and transform a person's life. That's the wisdom of God. We don't do that. God does that. So, it's the Spirit of God using a man or woman of God, preaching the Word of God, transforming people into the image of the Son of God. Paul is wanting them to see the wisdom of God in the preaching that he had there among them in Corinth. It's not human persuasion. It's divine power. Paul was using the power of the Spirit, relying upon the Spirit in his preaching. He preached powerfully.

Notice lastly in verse 5, his motive. His motive, and I love this in verse 5. He says, the reason is, this word that indicates the rationale, the reason or the motive behind what he's just said, I want your faith to stand not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. That's the whole motive. That's the whole reason. That's the whole intention. That's the whole design. Paul didn't want them to have a false faith. Paul wanted them to have a genuine faith that was standing in the power of God. He didn't want his personality. He didn't want his oratory ability. He didn't want his intellectual prowess to influence them in a human sense. He wanted the Spirit of God to work in their lives so that their faith would be in Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone. That's what I want in this church. I want your faith to be in Christ. I want your faith to be in God. I want you to have a solid foundation. I want you to have a real foundation. And when it comes to faith, the object of faith is the all-important issue.

What you put your faith in, and the object of your faith must be Jesus Christ. And by the way, everyone puts faith in something. Even non-Christians put faith in stuff. They have faith in their intellect. They have faith in their money. They have faith in their strength and ability. They have faith in... We all, we all live by faith. The Christian is basically a person who has faith in God and trust in the Lord. And Paul says, I want your faith to be grounded and growing in the person of Jesus Christ. He wanted them to experience the power of God in true conversion. As I preach, I have to be careful that I don't try to trick people into believing in Jesus. How many of you want to go to heaven when you die? Oh yeah, who wouldn't say yes to that? Wait a minute, what you need to know though too is that you are a sinner. It's not just, I want to go to heaven, that you need to turn from your sin. And you need to believe in Jesus Christ, that He is God in the flesh, crucified in your place on the cross, buried, risen from the dead, and that there's hope in no other. And you have to trust Him with your life. "Oh, I don't know about that. I can't do that." There has to be clear understanding of what..., and the Spirit of God has to convert somebody. Even if I call someone down to pray the sinner's prayer so-called, doesn't mean they're going to heaven. Doesn't mean they're born again. Sometimes when I pray people, I say, make it your prayer. It has to come from your heart. I can lead someone in the sinner's prayer. But if it isn't real, if it isn't, sometimes people say, well I walked down the aisle, or I prayed that prayer. How many people have you met? Their lives are all messed up. And they go, well I prayed the sinner's prayer. But their lives are a shamble. Did you really get born again?

The famous American evangelist D.L. Moody was walking on the street of Chicago one time. And this drunk came up to him. The guy was just totally bombed. You could smell the alcohol from a block away. He said, Mr. Moody, Mr. Moody, he said, I'm one of your converts. Mr. Moody kind of sizing the guy up said, you're obviously one of mine. You're not the Lord's. I don't want any converts. I want you to be the Lord's convert. Obviously, you know, the Lord didn't save you. Because when you get saved, there's a life change. There's a transformation. It doesn't mean you're perfect. It doesn't mean you don't stumble and fall. But you're going to experience the power of God and have a change.

So, Paul preached purposefully. He not only preached powerfully, but he preached purposefully so that these people hearing the gospel will trust in Jesus Christ. Now the second thing Paul wants in verses 6 to 9 is he wants them to see God's wisdom in his teaching. So, there's the preaching of the gospel and then there's the teaching of the believer and growing in the wisdom of God.

Follow with me verses 6 to 9. He says, "However we..., and by that I think Paul is talking about himself and the other apostles, we..., speak wisdom among them that are perfect." Now the perfect there is a reference to mature. It means ripe or fully grown or mature. Doesn't mean that you don't make mistakes. But we preach wisdom among those that are spiritually grown or mature, "but not the wisdom of this world." Again, Paul didn't preach worldly wisdom, "nor the princes of this world that come to not. For we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world under glory. Which none of the princes..., and the princes there are reference to world leaders or the secular world leaders. None of the princes ...of this world knew for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written: verse 9, Eye has not seen nor ear heard. Neither has it entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love him."

In the natural with your eye, with your ear, you cannot understand the wisdom of God. You can't receive the things of God. Now Paul in order to show that he was not against wisdom, per se, began in verse 6 by saying but wisdom we do speak. There's an intended contrast in verse 6. Less some of the Corinthians say, oh you mean as Christians we have to be unintellectual or there's no wisdom in God. No, there is a wisdom in God. It's a greater wisdom than the world has. You don't need to feel intimidated. Being a Christian, you don't have to check your brains out at the door when you go to church or you have to not think rationally. Christians are irrational or your faith is irrational and it's just a leap into the dark, blind faith. That's not Christian faith. And Paul says, but we do speak wisdom. There is a wisdom that we speak.

We want you to understand that. And he goes on to explain the difference between God's wisdom and the world's wisdom. Paul is talking about his teaching the wisdom of God to mature believers. And again, I'm going to move through these points here, but Paul says six things about the wisdom of God.

Number one, it is only known by the mature, verse 6. He says "we speak wisdom among them that are perfect." So, this is a wisdom that comes from those that are spiritually mature. So, you

have to be born again. You have to have the Spirit of God and then it's among those that are growing and maturing. So, this is the pastor's job to teach the Word of God to mature people. The pastor's job is to teach the Bible to God's people so that they will grow and mature. You got that? That's the pastor's job. The pastor's job is not to entertain the people. The pastor's job is not to make the people laugh at funny jokes. I actually like to goof off. I like to be funny. I like goofing off. So, I have to just pull back a little bit and say, God doesn't call me to be a comedian.

Someone criticized Charles Spurgeon, the great Baptist preacher one time. They said, you use too much humor in the pulpit. It was a woman. He said, Madam, if you knew how much I held back, you'd give me credit. I remember years ago, some guy came out, he was livid, man. He was just livid. He was like, you know, what do you think you are, a comedian, you're joking, you're just talking. He was just like, he was just blasting me, you know, all your funny jokes. I mean, what do you want me to do? Come out all dressed in black, you know, and just let's open our Bible. Jesus used humor. I mean, if some people have this idea, we're in the church, shh, don't say anything funny. God might get mad, strike us with lightning or something. Preaching is truth through personality, you know, be yourself. But there has to be truth. If it's just personality, then it's not preaching. You have to be preaching the Word of God. And not only that, I'm committed to preaching the Word of God in its historical context and to making clear what God says in His Word.

Notice, secondly, verse 6, the wisdom of God Paul taught was not the wisdom of this world. The wisdom Paul taught was not the wisdom of this world or literally this age, the Greek word is *Ionios*, this secular age that we live in. At the end of verse 6, Paul says, "we speak the wisdom of God among them that are perfect, not the wisdom of this world, nor the princes of this world that come to nothing." So, the wisdom of this world is going to come to nothing when Jesus Christ comes back in His second coming. So that's not what I'm preaching.

And then thirdly in verse 7, God's wisdom is a mystery. He says, and "we speak wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world began unto glory." Now, this word mystery again means that God has hidden these things but then revealed them. It's something that cannot be known unless God reveals that. So, God does reveal it to us in His Word.

And then fourthly, God's wisdom was unknown to the rulers of the world. Verse 8, "none of the princes of this world knew for if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." So, the Jewish leaders and the Roman authorities, think of Pontius Pilate and others, they didn't know what they were doing when they crucified Jesus. They didn't realize the wisdom of God. They didn't have the wisdom from above. So, they didn't understand it. They didn't know it. And all of this that Paul is saying is basically trying to say to these believers, don't be attracted to the wisdom of the world. He's trying to bring them back to God's wisdom found in God's Word.

I want you to notice number five, God's wisdom is contrary to man's experience. He says, as it is written, by the way, that's a quote from the Old Testament book of Isaiah, chapter 64 verse 4.

If you go to Isaiah 64:4, you'll find that Paul is quoting from the Old Testament. "Eye has not seen nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man." So, an unregenerated man, unsaved man, doesn't understand the things of God or have a knowledge of the things of God. "The things that God hath prepared for them that love him." Now that phrase "for them who love Him" is a phrase for Christians. That is actually a phrase or term describing Christians. You are God-lovers. You are those who love the Lord. You mean somebody you don't have to say, you saved, you washed in the blood, have you been regenerated? You can say, do you love the Lord? Do you love Jesus? So, we are God-lovers. And for those that love God, He has revealed them unto us. Notice verse 10, but He has revealed them unto us. How? By the Holy Spirit. So, he is going to talk about the Holy Spirit revealing God's truth to us through His Word. Now a lot of people misinterpret verse 9 as to being a reference to heaven. And I hate to pop your bubble on the hate to ruin a great verse, but it is not talking about heaven. Because Christians say, man when we get to heaven it is going to be awesome. Eyes not seen, ears not heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man. Heaven is just going to be fantastic. Heaven is just going to be awesome. Heaven is just going to be incredible. More than we could ever see or think or know or understand. Now is heaven going to be awesome? I think so. Heaven is going to be amazing. It is going to be incredible. What we see up there is going to be better than anything we see down here. What we hear up there is going to be better than anything we hear up there. But that is not what this verse is talking about. But yet you hear people quote it that way all the time. This is a classic example of taking a verse out of context, misinterpreting it, and then misapplying it. If you misinterpret a verse, chances are you are going to misapply it. Real good chance. That is why you start with interpretation, then you go to application. And your application must always be consistent with your interpretation. You can't just read a verse and make it mean what you want it to mean, and then apply it however you want to apply it. If that were true, why read the Bible? Just read the newspaper, read any other poem, read anything. You don't even need to preach from the Bible. This is why a lot of preachers don't preach from the Bible. Because they are not preaching the text in its context and expounding the meaning of the text. But Paul is talking here about what God does reveal to us. But God's wisdom is for those who love God and know God.

Then, last section verses 10 to 13, God's wisdom is centered in the Holy Spirit. This is a marvelous passage. And it's one of those passages that I have to admit, you can study, you can read, and you are kind of like, I don't know what Paul is talking about, doesn't make sense to me. Because it's so deep and so profound. Verses 10 to 13, God's wisdom is centered and revealed and made known through the work, the power of the Holy Spirit. Now this goes with what we preached on Sunday morning about the Holy Spirit. Notice verses 10 to 13, but another contrast. So, he says God, the unsaved person doesn't understand these things with the human eye, human ear, human heart. God can only be known by revelation. So, verse 10, "But God has revealed... this is the doctrine of revelation, He has revealed ...them... what, the things He's prepared for us that love Him. He's revealed them ...to us... how, ...by His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yea the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of man, save the spirit of man, which is in him, even the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have not received 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. Which things also we... Paul

and the other apostles ...speak, not in words which man's wisdom teach, but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

Now we all know that the Holy Spirit is needed for power, Acts 1:8. You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit's come upon you. But the Holy Spirit is also needed for God's wisdom. Do you know that? We go, Holy Spirit, give me power to be a good husband, give me power to be a good wife, give me a power to resist sin and temptation, and that's cool, that's great, that's what you should do. But here's another thing you need to do, you need to go, Holy Spirit, give me wisdom from above. Holy Spirit, give me wisdom. I think one of the things I pray for most is for wisdom. And what good does it do to have power if you don't have wisdom? What good does it do to have the Holy Spirit upon you if you don't have wisdom? Now, He brings that to the yielded believer.

But here's the second point. The wisdom of the Holy Spirit reveals to us is found where? In the Bible. You cannot neglect your Bible and ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom. Close your Bible, throw it on the shelf, let it collect dust, and just sit there and go, Holy Ghost, give me wisdom, Holy Ghost, just zap, you know. Woo, man, I'm so smart right now, I'm so smart, whoa, that's just, woo, the Holy Ghost just gave me wisdom. Ain't gonna happen, buckaroo, it just ain't gonna happen. If you want wisdom, then you gotta take up the Bible and ask the Holy Spirit to give you illumination in the revelation that will bring about a transformation of your life. Now those aren't just cute little words that rhyme, right? You're saying, man, John's an orator. Revelation, inspiration, revelation, illumination, transformation, all found here through the power of the Holy Spirit. You wanna have God's wisdom, you wanna have the wisdom from above? It's found in God's Word. You have to study and read God's Word. And that's why sometimes before I preach, I'll pray. I don't know if you've ever listened to what I'm praying. I'm praying, I say, I ask the Holy Spirit to speak through what he's spoken. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable. That we might know what is right, we might know what is wrong, we might know how to get right, and we might know how to stay right. What more is there? I want to know what's right. I want to know what's wrong. I want to know how to get right. I want to know how to stay right. It's all found in the Bible. So, I pray, I say, "Holy Spirit, speak through what You've spoken, Your Word." It's the living Word and the Spirit of God speaking to us, transforming our lives.

I want you to notice these three things. The Holy Spirit is essential in Revelation, verses 10 and 11. God reveals them by His Spirit. Spirit searches all things, the deep things of God. Now, just a little tidbit and I'll move on. I could preach a whole sermon on this one passage. Revelation is one of my favorite subjects. God is personal. He's a personal God. He's not just some big force out in the cosmos. The only way you can know a person is that person chooses to reveal themselves, self-disclosure. Now, you can say they're tall, they're dark, they're handsome, they have wavy hair, they have blonde hair, they have black hair, you know, they're thin. We can observe them. But the only way you can really know a person is if they talk, right? They express themselves. Have you ever been with somebody you really want to know? You know, come on, tell me, what are you feeling right now? What's been going on in your life? You want them to bear their soul. You want them to reveal themselves. You want them to talk. This is why it is

important in marriage that husbands and wives talk. It's kind of a good idea if you're married that you talk once in a while. And not just, you know, where's the food, you know, where's my shirt, where's the keys? See you later, kind of a thing. But, you know, I'm happy, I'm sad, I'm glad, I'm struggling or I'm afraid right now or this is how I feel. You know, you share yourself with them. I say all that is an illustration. This is the illustration. God cannot be known unless he chooses to speak. Self-disclosure. He can't be known with my eyes, my physical eyes, I can't find God, my physical ears, I can't hear God. And so, unless God chooses to reveal Himself to me, I can't know God. And God's revealed Himself in His Word by His Spirit. So, if you want to know God, you will discover God and get to know Him better in His Word because this is God's revelation.

And that's what he's saying there in verses 10 and 11. He says, "No man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man." In other words, you can't know what's in my heart unless I reveal it to you. "Even so, the things of God knows no man, but the spirit of God." By the way, this is a proof text for the deity of the Holy Spirit. Only God can reveal God. And if the Holy Spirit reveals God to us, then he is a divine person.

And secondly, notice in verse 12, the Holy Spirit is essential in illumination. "We have not received the spirit of the world, but we've received the spirit which is of God. That we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." So not only is the Bible God's revelation of himself, but when I read the Bible, I also pray that the Holy Spirit, who is the author of the Scriptures, will open my eyes and give me illumination. You ever met somebody that's not a Christian and they read the Bible and go, "ah! I didn't get anything out of it. It doesn't mean anything to me." It's because they don't have the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit illuminates us, the Word of God. There is no way I can do that. I'm really not your teacher. You know who your teacher is? The Holy Spirit is your teacher. I'm not your teacher, the Holy Spirit is. That's why you can read your Bible and the Spirit can give you illumination and understanding in the things of God.

Thirdly, and lastly, verse 13, the Holy Spirit is essential in instruction and in the inspiration of the Scriptures. But he instructs us, verse 13, "Which things we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teach, but which the Holy Ghost teaches, comparing spiritual things to spiritual things." The NASB renders that combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. The commentator Adam Clark says, explaining spiritual things to spiritual persons. So, this is the instruction of the Holy Spirit. He gives you illumination and He gives you instruction, which brings about, I would add, a fourth or a last and that is transformation. Transformation.

This is why, if I were to be asked Pastor John, "why do you just teach through the Bible?" Because the Spirit of God uses the Word of God to transform the child of God into the image of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. That's the only way it's going to happen. And it won't happen if you just come and look at me and listen to me on Sunday night or Wednesday night or Sunday morning. It'll only happen if you have been born again and then you get on your knees and you open this book and you pray to God, the Holy Spirit, and you say, give me wisdom from above.

Illuminate Your word to my life. And help me to obey what I read. Help me to put into practice what I read. Transformation. Transform my life by the power of Your word. That's how God works in sanctifying the believer.

Let's pray together. "Father, Thank You for this precious time to gather tonight. What a joy it is to be in Your house. What a joy it is to be with Your people. What a joy it is to study Your word. What a joy it is to sing Your praises. What a joy it is to have Your wisdom from above. The hidden wisdom. These mysteries that You've revealed to us in Your Word. Eye has not seen, ear has not heard. Neither has it entered into the heart of man, but You have revealed them unto us by Your spirit. And so, Lord, we love You. We learn about Your grace. We learn about Your mercy. We learn about Your compassion and Your faithfulness. And all that You are to us and our hearts thrill, our hearts rejoice. Lord, I pray that You will strengthen this congregation. Strengthen this fellowship. Transform us by the power of Your Holy Spirit. To live godly lives and holy lives in this present evil world. May the unbelieving world look on and see our lives are transformed. We don't just have enlightened intellect. We have transformed characters. So, Lord, may it be to Your glory, may it be to Your praise.

In Jesus' name, we pray.

And everyone agreeing said. Amen.

Let's stand and worship the Lord together.