

## 1Corinthians 2:6-16 - The Mind of Christ

### 1. The Multi-cultural Revolution

As we look forward to Australia day, I reflected on the changes that have taken place in our society. There has been a massive shift in our cultural make-up.

And so today, as we continue in Paul's letter to the church in Corinth, we have another revolution. For in this chapter, Paul explores the revolution that is required,

To move from seeing the cross as foolishness

To move to seeing the cross as the wisdom of God.

To move from seeing the cross as insane

To seeing the cross as the purest revelation of the mind of God.

That is, last week, Paul drew the distinction

between the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God,

And in fact, God in his wisdom destroyed the wisdom of the world,  
through foolishness of the cross

And it would be easy to think,

Well, then how do you get God's wisdom?

How do you move from worldly folly to Godly wisdom,

Particularly, as it has nothing to do with our feeble attempts to reach God?

Well, Paul answers these exact questions in our passage today.

Paul explains how the wisdom of God is transferred to human minds and hearts.

Paul illuminates the process required from seeing the cross as foolishness to

Seeing the cross of the wisdom of God.

## 2. Wisdom: God's (2:6b-12)

Now, Paul's big point, and the central verse for today comes from v. 6. << v. 6a >>

This sentence is the key to unlocking the whole chapter.

You see, first, Paul will delve into the nature of this wisdom,  
Second, he will explain how the words he speaks reveal such wisdom,  
Third, the apostle will show exactly who are the "mature" to whom he speaks.

So first, Paul explains the nature of "wisdom" in v. 6-7.

The nature of wisdom, comes through first, the source, and second, the revelation of wisdom.

### a. The Source of Wisdom – (6b-7)

The source of Paul's wisdom, ***the epicentre of Paul's wisdom is God himself.*** << v. 6b-7 >>

Paul explains what his wisdom is not.

Paul's wisdom is not from this age or the rulers of this age.

Last week, I mentioned the wisdom found in Philosophy –

- Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, Foucault, Nietzsche, ..., well,

Paul's wisdom is none of them, but also is not the wisdom of the rulers of this age.

That is, Paul's wisdom is not found in political power bases of his time nor ours.

It is not found in the wisdom of the Roman Empire,

nor in the Democratic West, nor the Communist powerhouse of China.

Paul's wisdom does not come from anything related to "this age".

Rather, Paul explains the exact source of true wisdom in v. 7.

True wisdom comes from God,

And not only does it come from God,

It is has been specifically revealed by God,

at a particular place, at particular time, to particular people.

That is, God had specifically intended for the cross to be revealed as his ultimate wisdom.

Before time began, before the Creator brought the creation into existence.

God had pre-planned, pre-determined, pre-destined his wisdom to be revealed.

What does v. 7 say? ***The wisdom of God has been decreed before the ages for our glory.***

**b. The Revelation of this wisdom – (vv. 8-12)**

Now, hand in hand with the source of wisdom goes the revelation of this wisdom.

***For God has chosen to reveal this wisdom to us. << vv. 8-9 >>***

Again, Paul spells out the negative side first.

Not only is the wisdom of God not found in the socio-political power bases of this age,  
But more, none of the rulers of this age have understood God's wisdom.

That is, throughout human history, human political and social power,  
have been epicentres for humanity's rebellion against God.

From the Tower of Babel, through to the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires,  
to the Roman Empire of Paul's day.

In fact, the rulers of Paul's age demonstrated their ultimate lack of wisdom,  
When they acted to politically assassinate God's chosen king.  
When they acted to suppress the radical fundamentalist from Galilee  
When they acted to execute a political radical  
through the capital punishment of that day, crucifixion.

On the positive side, however,

***God has chosen to reveal this wisdom to us through the Spirit. << vv. 10-12.>>***

Now, before we get all "Hollywood Spooky" on Paul, and see apparitions of God, in "spirit form",

We need to understand what Paul means by "spirit".

Paul's focus on "Spirit" is not on the physical manifestation,  
but on exclusive revelation of the spirit.

That is, the "spirit" of a human is not the internal aspect,  
contrast with the "physical" external appearance.

But rather, the "spirit" of a human has  
the inside knowledge of thought, will, intention, attitude, stance of that human,  
And then the "spirit" of a human can choose to exclusively reveal  
the thought, will, intention, attitude to others.

And so, Paul explains exactly how God reveals his wisdom to us.

God's spirit exclusively reveals what is known only to God and discloses to us,  
God's spirit exclusively reveals the very heart of God and enlightens our minds.

And this is very important point for Paul as he deals with those crazy Corinthians,

You see, there were people in the Corinthian church that had their own brand of wisdom.

They had their own special set of “secret spirituality”.

They had their own “spiritual wisdom”.

They had cultivated their own existence to move beyond normal earthly presence  
to the higher spiritual plane of existence –  
to anticipate heavenly glory.

And not only have they created a class system within the church,

They have also, very innocuously shifted the focus

From what God has done, in graciously giving us his Spirit.

To what they can do, in reaching their higher spiritual plane of existence.

And so, Paul wipes the slate clean.

Paul states the facts. There is only one category of Christian.

There are no 2<sup>nd</sup> class citizens in church.

God has graciously revealed himself to us by his Spirit.

So, all Christians have God’s Spirit,

And therefore all Christians truly know God.

Therefore, we need to be wary of divisions in the church today,

And we need to be especially on the look out for rifts amongst God’s people.

And of all things, we need to be wary of divisions based on the spiritual superiority.

The primary role of the Spirit is to exclusively reveal to the very things of God.

And make them known to one group only, and that group are all Christians.

We mustn’t be divided over the very source of unity.

***God has revealed to us the wisdom of the cross through the Spirit.***

### 3. We do speak: of these things... (2:13)

Third, ***Paul, and the apostles speak of these things in words taught by the Spirit.*** << v. 13>>

Paul communicates with words,

But they are not the words of human wisdom.

But they are not the finely polished, smoothly rounded words of rhetoric.

No. Rather, as we saw last week, Paul comes in weakness,

Paul comes in fear and trembling

Paul comes to the Corinthians shaking in his boots.

And yet, there is something else going on when Paul speaks.

There is another agent who is at work.

There is a completely different dynamic taking place when Paul speaks.

And that is the teaching of the Spirit.

You see, as Paul speaks, the Spirit is at work.

As the words go out from the Apostle, God's spirit is acting upon them.

As Paul preaches the gospel, the Spirit convicts people of the truth

***Paul, and the apostles speak of these things in words taught by the Spirit***

#### 4. The Mature: Those who are spiritual (2:14-16)

And so finally, ***Paul speaks to the Mature, to those who are truly spiritual.*** <<vv. 14-16>>

Paul qualifies his statement about his audience.

It is not the “unspiritual” that he is addressing.

It is not the person who lives on an entirely human level.

They are unable to perceive the gospel at all.

You see, why on earth would you engage in such bizarre activities as prayer?

What reason is there to study words in a book for two hours on a weeknight?

Why would you come to church on Sunday, when you could be at the beach?

These activities make no sense from the perspective of the world.

And yet,

For those who are spiritual, for us who follow Jesus,

Going to Bible study is the most natural thing in the world.

Going to church is so that we can know the mind of the Lord.

We have the mind of Christ.

When the gospel is preached, it is foolishness to those who are unspiritual.

It is ridiculous for those who live on an entirely human level.

And yet, for us who believe, for us who are spiritual,

We are looking into the very mind of Christ.

We are staring at the awesome plan of God.

***Paul speaks to the Mature, to those who are truly spiritual***

## 5. The Spiritual Revolution...

And so, I'll return to my original notion, of Revolution,  
Or really, what Paul is talking about here, the spiritual revolution.

For in the spiritual revolution, we find God is superintendent over the whole process,  
From beginning to end.  
God is the one who gives us the spiritual I revolution.

You see, God is at work,  
when Paul preaches the message of the cross ,  
For the message is preached in words taught by the Spirit.

God is at work,  
when the message of the cross is truly heard,  
For the message is revealed to be the wisdom of God by the Spirit of God.

And, finally, God is at work  
when the message of the cross, God's true wisdom is heard,  
For we truly know God himself and we are truly spiritual.

We have the mind of Christ!

Therefore, Paul speaks to us -

**"Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom" Amen.**