

## Epistle of First Corinthians VI How God Reveals

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Let's just review again, beginning right here in 1-Corinthians 2:9. There are some very important things we need to understand, and that is *no one* is going to understand about God unless God *reveals* it to them.

There was a panel of very learned men talking about God, theorizing about God, but they weren't able to understand about God. There is what is called in the world *theology*. Theology is the scientific study of God. Why is it that the theologians in the main are atheists? Or agnostics? Here's the reason:

1-Corinthians 2:9: "But according as it is written, 'The eye has not seen... [Remember what Jesus said concerning God the Father: 'No one has seen God at anytime or heard His voice.'] ...nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.'" There again, we need to key this loving God right in with understanding the Word of God. That is the very key important thing.

That's why scientists can study but they'll never find God. That is why religions can preach and never understand God. *Loving God requires a whole lot more than just having a feeling in your heart*, an emotional thing that you might have toward another person. It's entirely different. The requirement that God lays upon us, once He calls us, is that we have to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being; and that we have to *follow Christ* under all circumstances.

Luke 14:26: "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate... [loves God more in comparison to] ...his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple" (vs 26-27).

1-Corinthians 2:10: "But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit..." Whatever knowledge you have; whatever revelation you have concerning God; however you understand God from the Bible, has to be *revealed!*

I'll guarantee you, you can go to a dictionary and you can find every word that is in this Bible listed in the dictionary. But you won't find God *revealed* in the dictionary. It is not just printed words alone that is going to do it. It is what happens when God's Spirit works with our mind, when God *reveals* these things to us. We're going to find out how that works today.

Verse 10: "But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God." We need to get to the point of understanding the *deep things of God*. Too many times we go back to the basics, and with a group like we have here we are able to delve into the Bible and really understand things.

I know a minister who had a stack of sermon notes and he told me, frankly, 'What I learned in college I know more than any lay member wherever I go. If I stay in a church area four to five years I can just use these same notes over and over again.' Sure enough that's what he did! Well, he never progressed to the point of leading the congregation in God's Word to understand the *deep things* of God.

Therefore, that's why we never understood about grace, never understood about human nature, never understood about the nature of Jesus Christ when He was here on the earth, because that is a *deep* and *profound* thing that God has done. It is only *with God's Spirit* that we're going to be able to understand the *deep things* of God. We'll see how God starts with us and then works with us all the way through.

Verse 11: "For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man which *is* in him? In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God"—unless it is revealed! Let's think about the incongruity of it all.

- Can a man discover something that God does not know?
- Shall the thing that is made say to the Maker, what are You doing?

or

- I will tell you how to do it!

Just visualize it this way: the example in Jer. 18—where God told Jeremiah to go down to the potters house and watch him make a pot. If it isn't the way he wants it, he re-lumps it into another one, or makes another one. Can you imagine making a pot that the pot will talk to you and say, 'What are you doing? I don't like what you're doing.' *No way!* That's why *no man* knows the things of God.

This is why when it comes down to so many different religions and things there are so many different kinds, types, and varieties of religions, and also types, kinds and varieties of Christianity.

Today I read in the paper—every Saturday morning they have the religion and living section. It

was the leading theological story for the year: The pope is taking the central power back to himself, and then it was listing every one of the things that was done: feeding the poor and doing this and that. There was only one article worthwhile reading, which a Protestant said, ‘The Maryian—Mary—theology of the Catholics was completely wrong.’

Outside of that it was all just physical, carnal do-good. Yet, people are impressed by that because they do not understand that people are not deceived by the apparent evil, but they are deceived by the apparent ‘good.’ I thought that was interesting, especially since we’re going through this. *No man knows!*

Let’s see how this is done, v 12: “Now, we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that *is* of God, so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God.” God wants us to know.

Hebrews 5:8: “Although He was a Son, *yet* He learned obedience from the things that He suffered; and having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, after He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec; concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain... [that’s what Peter wrote of the Apostle Paul; some of his things were hard to understand] ...since you have become dull of in hearing. For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers, *but instead* you need to have *someone* teach you again what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God, and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food” (vs 8-12).

This was the whole problem in the Church in Corinth. They began looking at the carnal good and began following the carnal good and thinking that that was righteousness and spirituality. Paul had to tell them that ‘you are carnal and have need of milk’ (1-Cor. 3) — can’t even get them off the milk.

How is it that God *reveals* things to us? This becomes very important. This is basic, but I’m leading up to something:

John 14:15: “If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age: *Even* the Spirit of the Truth, which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells **with** you, and shall be **within** you.”

{Note sermon series: *Gospel of John* and the *Epistles of John*}

I want to emphasize the ‘with’ and what

happens when God’s Spirit is *with* you vs being *in* you. We know that when you are baptized and have had hands laid on you, the Holy Spirit is *in* you.

- How long will God’s Spirit be *with* a person?
- What will it do?

We can add many basic Scriptures:

- None can come to the Father except by Me
- None can come to Me except the Father draw him

Here we have *with* you.

Example: The first time I ever read the Bible with any understanding was quite by accident. I’d been with my mom in this restaurant in Vista, California, working to build up the restaurant, because my aunt and mother went into business down there and I owed my mother some money. We just worked our fingers to the bone and one of the things we had was the Christian Businessman’s Association who would come in every Saturday morning and have their breakfast. Sure enough they lean on you quite heavy and ‘won’t you come to church.’

I thought, yeah, maybe that would be good for business if I went to church. So, I went to church a couple of times and every time I went to church I got totally turned off. I forget what kind of church it was, but they had this big cross right up front, and I didn’t think anything of it. But these men were leaning on me to ‘join’ their group; ‘be born again.’

They invited me out to one of their prayer meetings one time and you get around in a circle and all pray and everybody was boo-hooing and crying. I was so absolutely turned off; I couldn’t believe it!

So anyway, this one night after getting off work about two in the morning—about an 18 hour shift—I came home and was so tired that I couldn’t go to sleep. We had a Bible so I dusted off the dust and opened the Bible and I turn to Exo. 20—just automatically opened there. I read there where it says, ‘I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods before Me.’ Then it says ‘you shall not make any graven image of any likeness of anything that’s in heaven above, that on the earth beneath, or that in the water under the earth and you shall not bow yourself to serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God.’

I closed the Bible and I said, ‘Hooray, I don’t have to go to any church I know of.’ I look back at that point and I remember it and I, in my own mind, believe that’s when God’s Spirit began to be *with* me. It wasn’t until about a year and a half afterward that God really began dealing with me to

call me. But I am convinced, because of that, that when a person reads the Bible really wanting understanding and a simple thing comes along that they understand and they accept, that God's Spirit will be *with* them.

- It doesn't mean they're called, yet.
- It doesn't mean they're converted, yet.

There's an activity that goes on that we don't know anything about. Again, I just want to review what happened when Elijah said, 'Oh, God, I'm all alone and I am the only one.' God said, 'There are 7,000 who have not bowed their knee to Baal.' What was the requirement? *It didn't say that they kept His commandments totally! It didn't say that they were really trying to follow God with all their heart!* It said, 'They haven't bowed their knee to Baal.'

Same thing here; let's take and apply this, Revelation 4:5: "And proceeding from the throne were lightnings and thunders and voices; and seven lamps of fire, **which are the seven Spirits of God...**"

Revelation 5:6. "Then I saw, and behold, before the throne and the four living creatures, and before the elders, *was* standing a Lamb as having been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, **which are the seven Spirits of God** that are sent into all the earth." What do these do when they go forth in all the earth?

Zechariah 4:10—here's a reference in the Old Testament to the same thing: "...These **seven are the eyes of the LORD** which run to and fro through the whole earth." It's something spiritual that happens. I want to emphasize this very clearly.

2-Chronicles 15:1 "And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded.... [Azariah was one of the prophets] ...And he went out to meet Asa, and said to him, 'Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD *is* with you while you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will be found by you.... [John 4:22-24—that God seeks those who worship Him in spirit and in Truth.] ...But if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.'" (vs 1-2).

2 Chronicles 16:9: "For **the eyes of the LORD...** [the seven] ...run to and fro in all the whole earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart *is* perfect toward Him...."

Now, I have to tell you another little incident that happened. I was 10-years-old at the time. I hadn't had too many religious experiences growing up, and we just moved on a farm and I was doing all the work. We had a team of horses and the first year we were there I learned how to use them. We had a

big hay rake, with these big tongs that come down and there's a seat in the middle and the axle is about 15-foot wide and the wheels are way out on the end. You rake up the mowed hay and you put in windrows, then you come along later and shock it.

I hired out to do my first job with a team of horses and the rake. I tootled down to the neighbors, and on this part of the road there are big grove of fir and cedar trees and it open up into a field. I was out there and started raking up this hay and putting it into windrows. Something freaked the horses and they just went wild and they started taking off and I couldn't do anything! Not a thing!

I'd been attending the Vacation Bible School that week and it made a little impression on me, so as these horses started running away, I got scared—I mean, really scared to death—because I could have fallen off of it, I could have been trampled under foot. As the horses left the field and started down the driveway and into where this grove of trees were, I prayed! I asked God to help me! All of a sudden it came to my mind something from my tumbling class. So, I let go of the reins of the horses and I got behind the seat and held onto the seat and I dropped off the back of the rake and put my hands down and went into a frontward roll and I wasn't hurt at all.

I got up and I remember *thanking God*. I started running after the horses and they went charging up past the place and my mom looked out and saw the horses going on down the road and she went out there and saw a piece of a broken log and thought it was my leg or arm and she was scared to death. The horses ran clear out to the main highway, ran across the road and came to a telephone pole and one horse ran on one side of it and the other horse ran on the other side and BAM! they came to an abrupt halt. I imagine those horses' mouths were sore after that!

But, I look back at just a couple of things like that in my life and I have to be convinced that God will hear and answer prayers like that. That doesn't mean that I'm some great and special person and God has been dealing with me and 'I was born to this job' or anything like that. NO!

But God's Spirit goes through the whole earth "...to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart *is* perfect toward Him...." That means that they're really asking God in sincerity. That's why you will hear people say, 'I prayed to God and I was delivered.'

Now, let's carry this another step further. Let's see how this works, Matthew 16:13: "Now after coming into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus questioned His disciples, saying, 'Whom do

men declare Me, the Son of man, to be?’ And they said, ‘Some *say* John the Baptist...’” (vs 13-14).

My wife gave me a little article of the organization called AIM (Accuracy In Media). You read so many of these things in the media today: ‘an undisclosed source’; ‘a reliable undisclosed source’; a reliable inside source who doesn’t want to be named.’ That’s how they get a lot of scuttlebutt out and a lot of inaccuracies. They never go back and correct them. But here’s human nature working the same way today.

“...‘Some *say* John the Baptist...’” Was that true? *No!* What happened when they came and asked John, ‘Who are you?’ He said, ‘Well, I’m not the Christ, I’m not *that Prophet*, I’m not Elijah.’ Jesus said, ‘He was Elijah.’

“...‘and others, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.’ He [Jesus] said to them, ‘But you, whom do you declare Me to be?’ Then Simon Peter answered *and* said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered *and* said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona, **for flesh and blood did not reveal it to you, but My Father, Who is in heaven**’” (vs 14-17).

We read in John 14 how God’s Spirit was *with* them. It revealed things to them while the Spirit was *with* them. The Father revealed it to Peter. Let’s see further how this works. What this really does is it helps us to be more grateful and thankful for God’s way, because whatever we understand has come from God—really and truly.

Matthew 11:25: “At that time Jesus answered and said, ‘I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent...’” We’re also going to see how these things are hidden from the ‘wise and the prudent.’ How is it that we can pick up a Bible and understand certain things? And other people can pick up a Bible and they can’t understand ‘nothing’—just to use a slang terminology. There’s a reason why. We’ll see and examine all of those.

“...and have **revealed** them to babes” (v 25). So, it is a revelation! You have to read! You have to study! How is that you understand? *God reveals it!* That’s quite a profound thing when you think about it; that there is Jesus Christ and God the Father working together to reveal these things to you and, hopefully, that we can understand the deep things of God.

Verse 26: “Yes, Father, for it was well pleasing in Your sight *to do* this. All things were delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone know the Father except the Son, and **the one to whom the Son personally chooses to reveal Him**” (vs 26-27).

That is just really fantastic when you understand it. God has dealt in our lives *to reveal* these things to us.

Let’s see some of the conditions that this revelation—this revealing, this understanding, the making of our calling and election sure—how this is done. I’m going to summarize several things. What is the beginning of understanding?

- ‘The fear of the Lord is the beginning of understanding’ (Psa. 111:10)!
- ‘A good understanding have those that keep His commandments!’

*We know that we have to love God; we have to fear God*

- ‘He that says *I know Him* and keeps not His commandments is a liar and the Truth is not in him!’
- ‘Hereby we know that we know Him **IF** we keep His commandments!’

These are all basic things on *how God reveals things to us!* He has to open our mind and we have to respond by:

- *fearing* God
- *loving* God
- *obeying* God

These are all basic things! I could go through many Scriptures and put all this together, but these are basic things, so I’m just going to summarize it.

What happens then when a person does not love and fear God? *They begin cutting themselves off!* Let’s see what happens to the wicked so that we understand these things. Here again is another Scripture that is a very basic one; I don’t want to spend so much time on the basic Scriptures and going through it, but here’s one that’s very, very important that shows about loving God.

- We have to love God!
- We have to keep His commandments!
- We have to love the Truth!
- We have to fear God!

David said, at one point, ‘open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Your law.’ Here’s what happens to the wicked:

2-Thessalonians 2:9—with the coming of the antichrist: “...according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are perishing **because they did not receive the love of the Truth**, so that they might be saved” (vs 9-10). That’s how the wicked are deceived.

- not only by Satan
  - not only by their own human nature
- but they are cut off from understanding because*

- they don't love God
- they don't love the Truth

Verse 11: "And for this cause, God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe *the* lie, so that all may be judged who did not believe the Truth, but who took pleasure in unrighteousness" (vs 11-12).

There's another prophecy that ties in with this, and that is in the book of Daniel, chapter 12, where Daniel wanted to know and understand. 'Oh, Lord, help me understand.' The Lord said, 'You won't understand, go your way, it's sealed to the time of the end.' ***But the wicked shall do wickedly and none of the wicked shall understand, and many shall be made white and the wise shall understand!***

That's how God's Spirit is able to work with us and *reveal* these things to us. As we saw before, it is the Holy Spirit that teaches us these things. Let's see how these things are accomplished for us. Here's another reason why the wicked do not understand:

Isaiah 29:9: "Be stunned and amazed! Blind your eyes and be blind! They are drunk... [Rev. 17:2—'they're all drunk with the with wine of the wrath of her fornication'—this whole religious system.] ...but not with wine; they stagger, but not *with* strong drink, for the LORD has poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and has closed your eyes..." (vs 9-10). It's a *very simple* process that God has used to *reveal*. That is one word: ***belief! If you believe you will understand.*** If you do not believe you will not, you will close your eyes.

Let's just use a classic example of how their eyes are closed, of a very simple Scripture. I imagine all of you could recite the Sabbath commandment by heart. *Remember the seventh day to keep it Holy, for it is a Sabbath unto the Lord. Six days shall you labor and do all your work, but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord, Holy unto the Lord. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and earth, the sea and all things in them that is, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore, you shall hallow the seventh day.*

That is a very clear, easy to understand Scripture—isn't it? But all Sunday-keepers have to close their eyes to that. If you close your eyes, what are you? *Blind!* Try going around your house sometime with your eyes closed. You're blind! You can't see! Just a simple little Scripture.

I remember when I first understood that and wanted to keep the Sabbath and came and told my boss that I'm going to keep the Sabbath, and he said, 'When did you get religious?'

"...He has covered the prophets and your

rulers, *and* the seers" (v 10). We're at the time of the 'seers' again. People flock to Jean Dixon and these people. These are the 'seers'—right? What do they see?

Verse 11: "And the vision of all has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed, which they give to one who is learned saying, 'Please read this,' and he says, 'I cannot, for it is sealed.'.... [That is how the Bible is to people.] (here's why): ...And the LORD said, 'Because this people draw near *Me* with their mouth, and with their lips honor *Me*...' " (vs 11-13). Don't we do that! We just went through Christmas time about the Lord being born; we draw near to God; praise God. Where is their heart? *Far from ME!*

"...but their worship of *Me* is made up of the traditions of men learned by rote, and their fear toward *Me* is *taught* by the commandments of men; therefore, behold, I will proceed to do again a marvelous work among this people, *even* a marvelous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise ones shall perish, and the wisdom of their intelligent ones shall vanish.' Woe *to* those who go deep to hide *their* purpose from the LORD! And their works are in the dark, and they say, 'Who sees us? And who knows us?'" (vs 13-15).

Isaiah 28:9—we're ready to begin to see how God is going to deal with us and go beyond. "**Whom shall He teach knowledge?**..." It is the Spirit that reveals the deep things of God that we might know the things that are freely given of God (2-Cor.). God wants us to know! He doesn't want us to be without knowledge. But we can't grow in knowledge until we grow in grace first; until we understand that all of this has been given to us by God's gracious goodness. That

- God's calling
- God's forgiveness of sin
- God's understanding that He gives us—the revelation of His Spirit
- to have Christ stand there as our righteousness before God

is a great and fantastic gracious thing given to us from God.

"...And **whom shall He make to understand doctrine?** *Those* who are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts" (v 9). Remember what the Apostle Paul said? *I have given you milk, and yet, you're still not able to bear it!* You have to be weaned. What happens when you're weaned? *You start eating food!* You can't live on milk forever.

When you're a baby you do fine; when you're a babe in Christ you do fine on milk. What if you came here and I said, 'All right, brethren, this

week I'm going to give you a sermon on the meaning of baptism.' I start out with all the basic Scriptures. Just think of the number of years you've been in the Church, and pretty soon you would sit there and you'd be able to predict which Scripture I'd go to next, because you knew it. Or if I came and said, 'Okay, brethren, I want to give you a sermon proving that we ought to keep the Holy Days.' You would know exactly where I was going. You have almost memorized it. There is one Scripture in Leviticus that I would turn to, Lev. 23; Deut. 16, etc.

Then I would come in the next week and I would give a sermon saying, 'Brethren, I'm going to prove to you out of the Bible that we ought to keep the Sabbath.' *All of that is milk!* And when you have an organization that has so many changes going on, no one is able to get away from crackers and milk. They might get away from milk entirely, but it's all milk and crackers; no strong meat! No real growing in God's Spirit to really understand His Word. You have to be drawn from the breast; you have to be weaned.

Then here's what happens, v 10: "For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept..."

Here is the reference that fits this the best, and this is the way that it has to be done, 1-Corinthians 2:13: "Which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in **words taught by the Holy Spirit in order to communicate spiritual things by spiritual means.**" That's *precept upon precept!*

That's why, brethren, in order to grow in grace and knowledge, even the Holy Days and Passover and things that we keep, we should learn something new every year. When it comes around to the Holy Days, I feel as though we learn something new every year, or learn something more profoundly, more deeply *every year!* To me that just really exciting!

Isaiah 28:10: "...line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little'.... [For people who do not have this *revealed* to them, here's what it comes out to them like]: ...for with stammering lips and foreign tongue He will speak to this people" (vs 10-11). That's kind of a prophecy.

There are some people that are trying to go back and Hebrewize all the New Testament. I've a little paper that they printout and so forth. The reason, brethren, that there are no—not even copies—of things of the New Testament in Hebrew or Aramaic is because of the rebellion of the Jews. God wiped Jerusalem off the face of the earth, drove the Jews around the world, and preserved all the New Testament in Greek. Some will argue with me

one way or the other, but that's what I feel has happened, and that's a fulfillment of this right here.

How did some of the Jews look at the Greeks? *With absolute abhorrence!* But would they keep God's commandments? *No!* Would they repent of their sins? *No!* So, God just really wiped the earth clean. They preserved the Old Testament, but in that they can't understand the New. When you try and tell them about something in the New Testament, it's just like with "...stammering lips and foreign tongue..."

(go to the next track)

I may have mentioned this before, I deal with a fellow who is a faithful Jew. He goes to synagogue Friday night. I know that he kept Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. I was in his house and I saw it marked out synagogue services on the nights that it should have been.

One time we got into a discussion—he knows that I'm a minister in a Christian Church—and his first question was: How can you believe in Christ if there is one God? I tried to explain to him; tried to relate to him. But it was just like I was stuttering and stammering. He didn't understand a thing. When I talked to him on the phone—every once in while he gets a little depressed when things aren't working right and he curses up a storm. And I have to say, 'You know, Bob, come on let's not have it that way.' Then he remembers, 'Oh yeah, well I'm sorry, Fred...' But as far as understanding it, he goes to synagogue. The rabbi reads it.

Verse 12: "To whom He said, 'This *is* the rest He gives to the weary' and 'This *is* the refreshing,' yet, they were not willing to hear."

Let's go by John 14 and review this one section. We're talking about

- reveal
- manifest
- make known

John 14:20: "In that day, you shall know that I am in My Father, and you *are* in Me, and I am in you. The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will **manifest** Myself to him" (vs 20-21). The word 'manifest' means *to reveal!* All of you have had Christ *revealed* to you.

- Did you see Him? *No!*
- Did you hear Him? *Probably not!*

But something went on in your mind, in your mind alone. All those around you—maybe even

your husband or wife—didn't have that going on. It was to *you!*

Verse 22: "Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, 'Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?'" We covered part of that.

- keeping God's commandments
- loving God
- fearing Him

Verse 23: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word...'" How much do you love God? Do you want to keep *all* the words of God in sincerity and in Truth? Not in strife and backbiting like the Corinthians were: 'I'm of Paul, I'm of Apollos...' But in the gracious love of God!

"...and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the Word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me" (vs 23-24).

Let's see how this is to be done, Ephesians 1:13: "In Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth... [we have to love the Truth (2-Thess. 2:10-11)] ...the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were **sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.**" What is the Holy Spirit to do? It is:

- to *teach* us
- to *reveal* to us
- to *comfort* us
- to *lead* us

'As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.'

Verse 14: "Which is *the* earnest of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession, to *the* praise of His glory. For this cause, I also, after hearing of the faith in the Lord Jesus that is among you, and the love toward all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you *the spirit of wisdom...*" (vs 14-17). We need to be growing in that, but we can even study—I'm not saying don't study; please understand that.

Just like with the difference between grace and commandment-keeping. Those who are hung up on commandment-keeping don't understand grace, because they don't understand that commandment-keeping is required and it's a duty, a debt. Just like if you have a loan on your house. You have a debt. You have to pay. If you don't pay, you don't keep your house. It's the same with a Christian. It is his

duty to do, but when he's done with that, 'All that I command you, you are unprofitable servants' because it all comes with the grace of God.

What I'm saying is that it's not he who studies will learn the most. It is not he who keeps the commandments the best will have the greatest understanding. It is with God's Spirit! You can study without the Spirit of God and learn nothing. Please don't say that I said not to study. *Study!* But we have to have the Spirit of Wisdom, which comes from God the Father; must come from God. We can't churn it up. Do you understand that? I've learned that.

I've studied, I've prayed, done everything as a minister, but when I really had gone through circumstances, and I just asked God to help me, I guess the most often repeated prayer that anyone will give is, 'Lord, help me!' Isn't that true? 'God, help me!' So, when you come to a point where that is really what you want, and you completely yield yourself to God, then *He will begin revealing* and *adding to* and we can grow in grace and knowledge.

It's kind of like I heard one time, I heard a minister say that 'If the Church would keep the commandments of God better we would have more miracles.' Everyone said, 'Yeah, that's right. If the Church would keep the commandments of God better we would have more miracles.' **WRONG! Miracles come because God grants them, and through His grace!**

If it were that we could keep the commandments better, and God would be obligated to pour out miracles, we would be doing a work to make God indebted to us—right? Then it's no more grace; it's work! But the same way: if we come to the point that we really love God, and we just really give ourselves to God. It's not going to do away with your human nature—it isn't! We can all be inspired right here on the Sabbath and we can walk out of this room and we still drag our human nature with us. But it's your attitude toward God that gives it.

Verse 17: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you *the* Spirit of **wisdom** and **revelation** in *the* knowledge of Him." It's got to be by *revelation*. It's not going to be some vision that's going to appear before you or anything, but by *revelation*. By *working in your mind* "...in the knowledge of Him."

I don't think, brethren, that we still have the full revelation of Jesus Christ. I think that we have a whole lot more to learn about what God really, really did for us in sending Christ. Not that we don't understand. We understand, but how deep is that understanding? *I think there's a whole lot more to it!*

When you really think that the Holy, righteous, perfect God took upon Himself ‘the law of sin and death’—think on that for a minute. That is so overwhelming. I hope we’re going to understand more when it comes down to the Passover time. To understand what an absolutely marvelous and incredible and gracious and wonderful thing it was. ***The obligation of a minister is to teach!***

In the past, it was more the primary obligation of the minister to be the ‘policeman.’ If the ministry or minister is not himself growing in grace and knowledge, how can his congregation grow in grace and knowledge? God has set forth certain things that are so.

In 1-Cor. 2 we found where Paul said, ‘It was revealed unto us, we’—he’s referring to the ministry. Then he said to the Corinthians, ‘You...’

Then in Eph. 3 we’ll see how it was revealed to the apostles and prophets to teach the people. When the ministry, or minister, is not growing in grace and knowledge, growing in grace and really studying God’s Word—from the point of view of just letting it really penetrate his mind, heart and being—he’s going to reach a certain level that he is cut off or can only go so high.

Then what’s going to happen to the congregation? *They can only reach a certain level!* Then what’s going to happen? *Of necessity there will be those disciples—or members, learners—who will then be seeking God more than the teacher.* Then you’re going to have a problem that the disciple will know more than the teacher. Then you’re also headed for big trouble as far a group is concerned. Not individually, as the individual is concerned. He may be terrific, wonderful, maybe exhilarated with what he’s learning.

Verse 18: “*And may the eyes of your mind...*” Note: Job 42:1-6—remember what Job said to God after the whole experience and God talked to him out of a whirlwind? Imagine what an experience that was for Job. Think about it! Sitting there for weeks with these sores and boils and your friends around berating you with arguments for days on end. Finally, God talks to Job out of a whirlwind and says, ‘Job, where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?’

I imagine Job just felt like a worm! Have you ever felt that? He got so puffed up in his greatness, and God came along in a whirlwind and just crushed it out. Then Job said, ‘I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, and ***now my eye sees You.***’ Especially if you’re a big-time architect and maybe even built the big pyramids.

It the same thing here, v 18: “***And may the***

***eyes of your mind be enlightened...***” How is that done? *Go back to a very basic Scripture!*

John 3:18: “The one who believes in Him is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment: that the Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the Light because their works were evil” (vs 18-19). Men love the spiritual ways of the world!

Could you imagine really laying out the people and telling them in the Catholic Church about idolatry and Mary and the Mass? *They’d come and chew you alive!* God hasn’t opened their mind. What they think they are doing is wonderful.

Same way with people in India, going down and being baptized in the Ganges River. If someone came out there and said, ‘Oh you Indians out here’—like the Apostle Paul came into Athens—‘I see all these statues and you’re superstitious and you’re trying to get right with God; this is not the way!’ They love that! Just like some of the volcanoes in Hawaii, some of the natives want to stop the volcanoes and they offer sacrifices to the goddess Pele—love darkness.

Verse 20: “For everyone who practices evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, so that his works may not be exposed... [here’s how our mind are enlightened]: ...but the one who practices... [‘poieo’] ...the Truth comes to the Light... [You must be walking in the Light; going toward that Light on a continuous basis.] ...so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*’ (vs 20-21). That’s how! That’s how our minds are enlightened.

Ephesians 1:18: “*And may the eyes of your mind be enlightened in order that you may comprehend what is the hope of His calling...* [Remember, ‘the eye has not seen, nor the ear heard what God has prepared for those that love Him.’ God wants us to know!] ...and what ***is the riches of the glory of His inheritance*** in the saints.” What are ‘the riches of His glory?’

I don’t know about you, I always read the paper every morning and I look for certain things. I look for health articles, but I also look for astronomy articles. Every week they’re discovering new galaxies. This last week they discovered what is called a ‘super nova’ that allegedly exploded 250-million years ago.

- Is God wealthy? *Think about it!*
- How much property do you own? *Very little!*

Every once in a while, don’t you feel like you would really like to own something purely, wholly, your very, very own and not have to pay anybody?



How much is God going to give us? It says *inheritance*, the ‘riches of His glory.’ Being in New Jerusalem. Having a place that God has prepared for you to live in.

I don’t know about you, but every time I get to a Scripture like this, I try and think: God, what is it going to be like? I’ve seen some of these movies like Star Wars and you see all this ‘Mickey Mouse’ stuff that they do and all the special effects and so forth, and I think: God, what is it going to be that we inherit? If you inherit something, you own it! And one of the deepest, most profound things I think that we can understand is that we are going to inherit the Kingdom of God! If you inherit the Kingdom of God, you have *ownership* in it. Think about it!

I would like to have some great telescope that I could look out into the universe and really see some of the things that are out there and to think that God is going to give us of the ‘riches of His glory.’ They know that the universe is fabulously wealthy! What’s it going to be like to be spirit beings and have the ‘riches of His glory’ be given to us? That’s the hope of our calling, brethren!

We all have to go through this thing, because I know that next week we’ll be down in the muck and mire of earning a living. I know that, and that’s why I’m glad for the Sabbath that comes along and we can get our eyes up on the hope of the calling and the ‘riches of His glory.’

Verse 19: “And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the inner working of His mighty power.” Is there anything too difficult for God? God hasn’t done certain things for us that we would like to have done.

- Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we could all be whole and healed?
- Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we didn’t have the aches and pains of old age?
- Wouldn’t it have been wonderful for the Apostle Paul to have seen clearly?
- Wouldn’t it have been wonderful for him to have not suffered?

Read 2-Cor. 12 when Paul says that God told him ‘His grace was sufficient.’

- Would you rather suffer a little in the flesh, but understand the deep things of God?

Maybe there’s a tradeoff. I don’t know and I’m not wishing anyone suffer by that. I’m not saying that because we suffer, therefore, we know more. There are people who suffer more who know less.

But this is the important thing right here, v 20: “Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised

Him from *the* dead, and set *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*.” When we come before Christ, we are coming before the great power of God.

Verse 21: “Far above every principality and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named...” Every time I think of that, I think of the promise where God says that He has a ‘new name, that He’s going to tell us. *A new name!* Think what that is going to mean.

- Does God have a fantastic name?
- Does God have a fantastic existence in glory? *Yes!*

“...—not only in this age, but also in the *age* to come; for He has subordinated all things under His feet, and has given Him *to be* head over all things to the Church, which is His body—the fullness of Him Who fills all things in all” (vs 21-23).

Ephesians 3:1: “For this cause I, Paul, *am* the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles, if indeed you have heard of the ministry of the grace of God that was given to me for you; how He made known to me **by revelation** the mystery... [the secret of God; has to be by revelation.] ...(even as I wrote briefly before” (vs 1-3).

It would be interesting to have that epistle—wouldn’t it? We don’t have that epistle—do we? There are some writings of Paul that we don’t have, because God didn’t want them included. We have two letters to the Corinthians—1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>—obviously, there was more communication. In the book of 1-Cor. he refers to things that they wrote him; chapters 4-8 concerning things offered to idols.

In 1-Cor. 16, where he says ‘I say *I’m ashamed* to you that some of you don’t have the knowledge of God. I thought to myself, it’s really there in the Bible. There were people in the Church who had no knowledge of God! Think of it! That’s something—isn’t it? *Made known by revelation!*’

Verse 4: “So that when you read *this*, you will be able to comprehend my understanding in the mystery of Christ), which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His Holy apostles and prophets by *the Spirit*” (vs 4-5). Ties right in with 1-Cor. 2.

Philippians 3:7: “Yet, the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ. But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord...” (vs 7-8). There’s nothing in this life that we should compare to the knowledge of God, the knowledge of Christ, or to cling to.

“...for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count *them* as dung; that I may gain

Christ and may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law, but that *righteousness* which *is by the* faith of Christ—the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith; that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection...” (vs 8-10).

That’s going to be quite a thing—isn’t it? What’s it going to be like for all of us to be resurrected, or if we’re still alive, to be change—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—to have that very power and Spirit of God and go ZAP and you’re raised from the dead or you’re changed from flesh to Spirit! That has got to be an exhilarating thing; it’s just got to be!

“...and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” (v 10). Paul learned by the things that he suffered—didn’t he?

Verse 11: “If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead; not as though I have already received, or have already been perfected...” (vs 11-12). That’s one problem they had in 1-Cor. when we get to the fourth chapter. They were saying, ‘Paul, we don’t need you, we have all these great religious experiences. We have songs, revelations, speaking in tongues; man, this is a wonderful thing.’ Paul wrote ‘I would that you were perfect; I would that you were reigning, that we could reign with you’—a little sarcastic!

But notice Paul’s attitude, “...but I am striving, so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not count myself as having attained; but *this* one thing *I do*—forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to the things that are ahead” (vs 12-13). That’s why you have to have *the hope of the calling* to reach before!

Verse 14: “I press toward *the* goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Most of the time we stop there and we’re very inspired—right? We’re very inspired, but notice, this brings us back to reality:

Verse 15: “So then, let as many as *be* perfect be of this mind. And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, **God will reveal** even this to you.” So that you may repent of it. Isn’t that something? God will *reveal* it! Therefore, if God is going to *reveal* it and we yield ourselves to God, and the Spirit of God the Father do the ministers have to become policemen? *NO! God will reveal* that to you.

1-Corinthians 2:1: “And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with superiority of speech or wisdom, in proclaiming the testimony of God to you. For I decided not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified”

(vs 1-2)—which is a whole lot; I mean, that is so fantastic.

Verse 3: “And I was in weakness... [If he’s an apostle why hasn’t God healed him?] ...and in fear and in much trembling *when* I was with you; and my message and my preaching *was* not in persuasive words of human wisdom; rather, *it was* in demonstration of *the* Spirit and of power; so that your faith might not be in *the* wisdom of men, but in *the* power of God. Now we speak wisdom among **the spiritually mature...**” (vs 3-6). {Note Philip. 3 that kind of perfection that comes through Christ}

“...however, *it is* not *the* wisdom of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nothing” (v 6).

Now then we’ve covered all the rest of it, but I just wanted to review those. Don’t those words mean a whole lot more when you go back and review after what we’ve just covered? *Yes, they do!*

1-Corinthians 3:1: “And, I, brethren, was not able to speak to you as to those who are spiritual...” That’s the whole key to all the problems that they had; they were not spiritually-minded. They reached a certain point in their growth, then they added to it the ‘goodness’ of what *they thought* was good, mixed it all together and created all kinds of problems.

I’ve seen this happen in the Church, too, especially in the area of what is called psychology, where you mix psychology and the Word of God together, and it just doesn’t work—water and oil don’t mix. Psychology is a way to solve your human problems *without God*. How can you take that and mix it with what Christ has. There are a lot of things that sound similar. That’s why it’s so devastating, but sooner or later you are turned ever so slightly away, *away, away* from God, because you’re mixing carnal with spiritual. You can’t take the carnal goodness of this world and mix it with the spiritual goodness of God. It will glue together for a while, but it’s bound to come apart.

“...but as to those who are carnal—even as to babes in Christ.... [Therefore, they weren’t weaned, so they couldn’t go forward.] ...I gave you milk to drink, and not meat; for you were not yet able *to receive spiritual meat*; and neither are you able now, for you are still carnal. For since envy and contention and divisions *are* among you, are you not carnal? And *are you not* walking according to human ways?” (vs 1-3).

Therefore, God has had to let His Church—and understand why God has let His Church—do the many things and end up in the many different branches that it has gone to.

1. I think it's easier to work with a smaller group.
2. It's part of God's correction on everyone so that we all learn somewhere along the line.

When you go through them, it isn't easy. It's like the Ronald and Nancy Reagan have said: They're so disillusioned that the people who were their friends have left them. They feel down and out and depressed and disappointed.

- What does that teach us? *To look to Christ!*
- Is it therefore profitable? *Yes!*

I would rather be where there's no hassle, no envying. I can feel it in a congregation. I don't feel any of that with the people we have. But there are times when I've stood up to speak and you can feel the attitude of the congregation toward you. Or you can feel that attitude of two or three or four.

I go back and listen some of my sermons that I did years ago and I sense in it a certain combativeness in my speaking. The reason is because I was mentally and spiritually fighting those kinds of attitudes. I really didn't know what it was until one day the boom was lowered!

It's the same thing. If we have to come to where we have smaller groups where we can live in harmony—and it's harder because you can't get lost. You can't have your 'tongues' people over here, your 'revelation' people over here, your 'healing' people over here, and your 'Psalms' people over here as you would in a congregation of 500. You can't go hide! You can't sneak in the door and sneak out! We're either here or not.

But what does it do? *It teaches us to understand we all have human nature. God has called us and God has loved us, so we all need to set aside those things and grow in grace and in knowledge!*

Is that a fantastic thing? *Yes, it is! It is a wonderful thing!* Too bad it has to be that way, that it's done that way. But I guess that's just the way it is. So, let us go on from here and let us learn some of the lessons of the strong meat, which is going to come. Paul is going to give them some pretty strong stuff!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 2:9
- 2) Luke 14:26
- 3) 1 Corinthians 2:10-12

- 4) Hebrews 5:8-12
- 5) John 14:15-17
- 6) Revelation 4:4
- 7) Revelation 5:16
- 8) Zechariah 4:10
- 9) 2 Chronicles 15:1-7
- 10) 2 Chronicles 16:9
- 11) Matthew 16:13-17
- 12) Matthew 11:25-27
- 13) 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12
- 14) Isaiah 29:9-15
- 15) Isaiah 28:9-10
- 16) 1 Corinthians 2:13
- 17) Isaiah 28:10-12
- 18) John 14:20-24
- 19) Ephesians 1:13-18
- 20) John 3:18-21
- 21) Ephesians 1:18-23
- 22) Ephesians 3:1-5
- 23) Philippians 3:7-15
- 24) 1 Corinthians 2:1-6
- 25) 1 Corinthians 3:1-3

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Jeremiah 18
- John 4:22-24
- Psalm 111:10
- Daniel 12
- Revelation 17:2
- Leviticus 23
- Deuteronomy 16
- Job 42:1-6
- 2 Corinthians 12
- 1-Corinthians 4-8, 16

#### Also referenced: Sermon Series:

- *Gospel of John*
- *Epistles of John*

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