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We are going to turn out to our scripture reading. Which is the entirety of first corinthians chapter 2. Relatively short chapter about 16 verses here. So, we're singing that song, i can't help but think of the countless times my family and i have driven across the country to california.

And, This song always comes to mind when you're driving across the plains. And you can see the entire storm coming on the horizon with all the lightning coming down and striking. And truly, our god is great and we are reminded that the god of the storm is our god, and the god who gives peace to his people.

It is our great privilege to hear his voice through his word. So, with that, in view in first corinthians chapter 2, let us give our diligent attention to the word of god. And i brethren when i came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you, the testimony of god.

For i determined not to know anything among you except jesus christ and him crucified. I was with you in weakness in fear. And in much trembling. Am I speech in my preaching? We're not with persuasive words of human wisdom. But in demonstration of the spirit, And of power. That your faith should not be in the wisdom of men.

But in the power of god, However, We speak wisdom among those who are mature. Yet not the wisdom of this age nor of the rulers of this age who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of god in a mystery. The hidden wisdom which god ordained before the ages for our glory.

Which none of the rulers of this age knew. Perhapd. They known. They would not have crucified, the lord of glory. But as it is written, i is not seen nor ear heard. Nor have entered into the heart of man. The things which god prepared for those who love him.

But, God has revealed them to us. Through his spirit. For the spirit. Search is all things. Yes, the deep things of god. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of a man, which is in him. Even so no one knows the things of god.

Accept the spirit of god. Now, we have received not the spirit of the world. But the spirit who is from god that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by god. These things we also speak not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the holy spirit teaches comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

But the natural man does not receive the things of the spirit of god for. They are foolishness to him. Nor can he know them. Because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges, all things. Yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For who has known the mind of the lord that he may instruct him.

But we have, The mind of christ. Thus, far the reading of god's holy word. Amen. Well with that, let us join our hearts in prayer, asking the lord's blessing in his word. Almighty god, we are here

to listen to your voice. And we ask that Jesus Christ by his word and by his spirit would be the true preacher this day.

We thank you for the glorious privilege of gathering at your feet to learn of you. And Lord, we ask that you would rent the heavens that you would come down in power that you would make yourself known, not only in our ears and in our minds. But in the depths of our hearts, Lord we pray that everyone here will behold your glory.

We pray that we would all know you from the least to the greatest and we pray that if any do not know you, this would be the day of salvation. We pray for all of us that you would press us onward and upward for the high calling of God in Christ, our Lord and our Savior.

And whose name we pray. Amen. You may be seated.

As we come to this, glorious text. We are coming to the end at least for most of us. Of a good weekend together, focusing on the glory of our triune God. And seeing how God saves us in particular. And we see that in everything, God does. He does it from the Father, through the Son.

By the Spirit. So even today. By one Spirit in Jesus Christ. We are before the face of God our Father and what a fitting way to close our time together our conference together on the Trinity by doing what we're doing right now. Gathering in worship. Fold this closure. I do plan to preach this text at the Greenville Seminary conference this year.

And some of you are going more of you than I suspected. And also full disclosure. My sermon will be different every time, so hopefully, that that won't hinder you. But in praying over what is needed for us. What is one of the most important things that we can grasp and meditate on together?

This morning, this weekend. This place this time. This text. Kept impressing itself on my heart. And my mind, What the text deals with? Is actually knowing God. And I mean, what I say there knowing God. Not simply gathering information about God not simply puzzling over what God is like or being able to argue with other people.

But actually knowing him. Just like children you can say, you know, your brothers and sisters, you know, your parents. I mentioned in the last couple of days, Pilgrim's Progress. And many of the children perked up and seemed to have been familiar with Pilgrim's Progress. Uh, if anyone child or adult has not read, Pilgrim's Progress.

You need to, to get to work quickly. But one of the things that comes to mind from Pilgrim's Progress illustrates what Paul is getting at in this text quite well. And that is in the first part. Of Pilgrim's Progress. There's a character named Talkative. And Talkative, in many ways, in my mind, is one of the most disturbing characters in the entire book.

Because as he meets the two Christians on the road, He wants to talk about anything and everything. This is a man who loves his theology. He wants to debate all the fine points. This is the one who wants to talk about infant baptism. This is the one who wants to debate, even the Trinity and talk about election and predestination whatever it is.

It's fair game. And you might say okay well that sounds good. The man's interested in the Bible, the man's interested in theology. A lot of people aren't interested in those things so off to a good start but something is fatally wrong with the man? The man will talk about anything in theory and nothing in practice.

He'll talk about any topic, he'll debate anything that anyone will present to him unless it touches his heart, In other words, the real questions are where are you personally, what do you do with what, you know, do you see a person? The Lord Jesus Christ. At the end of the tunnel and are you actually reaching out to him?

Would you count everything lost? If the only thing you receive through all of your knowledge was just God himself. And anything that touches the man's heart is off limits. I have to say, Coming to this text and thinking about bunnions, pilgrims progress, talkative It seems that in our circles that is in Presbyterian reform churches, people do their best to imitate talkative All you have to do.

Is look at facebook or other social media. And what do you see? You see people whose heads are full of knowledge. They want to debate everything in fact because it's social media and it's not a person sitting next to you or, or in front of you eye to eye, they're willing to insult people as as they will left and right.

And vilify anyone who doesn't agree with them and you're left wondering at the end of the day. What's the point? Is this going anywhere? Is all of our theology, our confessions of faith, our catechisms, our bibles, even Do all these things simply amount to enabling us to argue with people.

Are we talkative? Well, Paul has in mind here. Is something very different. The Corinthian church was full of talkative full of people that love to argue over everything to the point that it was literally tearing the church apart. And what Paul does as a wise pastor, is he cuts to the heart of the matter and he gets to the heart of their hearts in such a way that he actually addresses every pastoral problem in the church in one thing.

And here it is. Here's the secret to first Corinthians. You are thinking in worldly wisdom. Instead of the wisdom of God in Jesus Christ, Stop thinking in worldly terms, go back to Jesus Christ, go back to the wisdom. God has given you and let this govern and drive you from the heart outward into all of your relationships into everything else you do.

So what Paul is getting at here in first Corinthians 2 is eminently practical and primarily important And what is he actually getting at, in this particular text? Well, let me state it. What Paul is saying in first Corinthians 2, the whole chapter is he's giving us The means the matter and the mover we need to know God.

Not just to talk about God, but to know, God, And he gives us a means by which we need to know God, namely the preaching of the word. And he gives us the matter, the content, the thing we need to hear the thing. We need to look for namely Jesus Christ.

And he also gives us the mover who enables us to receive the matter. Namely the Holy Spirit. So what God is doing? Is he is directing us under the preaching of the word to lay, hold of Jesus by the Spirit. There's my Trinity connection. And I hope those of you are here from the conference, just see it.

Now we pick up the text. We read it. There it is. They're the persons the taxes about God. The gospel is about God. Well, let's begin with the means notice in verses one through five. What Paul actually says, I brethren when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or wisdom declaring to you, the testimony Of God.

What he's really saying is something like this. When I came into your midst, I didn't seek to impress you. What's actually going on in the church. I mean this is a divided church. These

people are concerned about their own things, who has the best pastor? Who's received the best baptism?

What do i do to get back at my neighbor? When he endangers my stuff. What about church discipline? Well, whatever i am whatever i've done. At least, i'm not like that guy over there or that woman of there. The lord's supper. It's all about my fellowship with christ. Even if i get to the table and take my, what i want and there's nothing left for the people sitting next to me too bad for them.

You didn't get in line fast enough. And you get the idea, you see what's actually going on with the Corinthians. They are selfish. They are self-centered as we as christians, so often are Focusing on our own problems, focusing on our own advantages focusing on our own and benefits and here paul confronts this by saying, this is why.

When i came to you, i didn't come on your own terms. You're thinking like worldly people, you're putting yourselves first, you're putting others next to you and god is really at the end of the chain, the only reason, maybe he's even in your thoughts at all, is to baptize what you're doing and somehow christianize it.

Literally, we're arguing over baptism here, right? Who has the best baptism? And when i came to you, i purposefully did not give you what you wanted. I didn't come with flashy rhetoric. I didn't come with excellence of speech. I didn't come to you trying to trick you, trying to gain popularity, trying to say, as as peter and Apollos and all these other people are preaching.

To you. They need to get in line. I'm putting myself forward. You really need to listen to paul. But what does he actually doing? He's not making a comment on. What kind of speaker? He was He's not saying in other words, i came to you, trying to preach to you, the boringest sermons, i possibly could And if i put you to sleep, i counted myself in the wisdom of god rather than the wisdom of men.

And some people you know, as silly as that sounds, i think try to take this this way. We shouldn't be interesting. We shouldn't be clear. We shouldn't have an outline. We just throw it out there. And if people don't like it, Then we blame it on the holy spirit.

The spirit's not working. Well. There's only two of us who are preachers here that i know of, but we need to ask as well if that's our attitude is the preaching working is the spirit working in us. Do we love the lord? Are we excited about the things that we're we're getting?

Or are we just talking Are we just talking and spewing out what's in our heads? What paul is getting at here is it's not the outward form. I sought by every means possible to make things clear to make things plain to direct you in the right way to take you away from yourselves.

And bring you back along the right path. What is that? Notice he says for i determine not to know anything among you. Except jesus christ. And him crucified. Now. When i say here, the preaching of the word is imbue, the preaching of the word is the great means that god is actually using to promote the true knowledge of god.

What he's actually telling us is there's a focal point. Of that preaching of the word. What do you need to hear above everything else? Not what you want to hear, but what you should want to hear? Jesus christ and him crucified and what is paul actually getting at? There's something of a godly impatience in paul.

At this point. It is as though, whatever he discusses wherever he is going, he cannot wait to get back to jesus christ. Now, under the second point in just a moment, we'll see the reasons for

that but in the healthiest forms of christianity, Past and present. People have always been the most obsessed with jesus christ.

I'm putting that is strongly as i can obsessed with jesus christ, i can hardly think of anything else. I could hardly talk of anything else. This becomes really different, doesn't it? Then the person who simply says i want to debate theology. I've seen people in reformed churches that have even told me this in these words.

I just can't wait to argue about things. I just can't wait to get into a debate. Well, you know, it's one thing if we're saying, i want to understand better. I want to know better, but beware. And don't be surprised. That if that is your attitude towards learning towards scripture towards theology, Your church may end up looking like the Corinthian church.

Now, i don't Know any of you terribly. Well, so i'm not throwing a bone at anyone or or picking on anyone particularly here. But what i am stressing is in the means by which god leads us to know himself. Jesus christ is the focal point. When he says, i purposed in my heart to not make anything known among you, except jesus and him crucified.

This is not just because this is an immature church. Jesus christ. And him crucified as the beginning and middle and end of christianity. Without him, there is nothing. Jesus christ, constitutes the ABCs, the first principles of the curriculum that you need to study to know God. And jesus christ is also the PhD.

Of studying god's word of knowing god's name. And what paul is actually saying is this is the one thing that pulls us together, whatever, disagreements. We have whatever rights, we think are trampled and children. I know you face this if you have brothers and sisters This is where you learn to deal with conflict and godliness in the church is at home.

And i know it's hard. But ultimately you need the same thing as your parents. You need to do, what is right? You need to pursue the good of your brother and sister obedience to your parents, not because Their right. Or you're right, or somebody's wrong. But because you love jesus christ.

Same thing that drove paul's preaching. And then he says i was with you and weakness and fear and he must trembling if you want to look at my outward appearance, if you want to look at who i actually am, what do i have to offer as a preacher as a leader?

It's really not much to go on. There's really not much there. I have no confidence in myself, i don't trust in myself but i do know that i must proclaim to you. One thing and only one thing, when i tell you the whole council of god and everything, god has revealed that you need to know all of it.

Hovers around revolves around has the aroma and sent as it were of jesus christ in him crucified. This is why he says verse 4. My speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom. But in demonstration of the spirit, And of power. That your faith should not rest in the wisdom of men in the power of god.

Now, the rest of the chapter, he's going to explain why these things are. So the preaching of jesus christ, is the great means the Lord uses to drive you. And i to know God. And notice the trinity here, the father, testifies, what does he testify to? He testifies to his son and paul, as it were takes up the testimony into his own heart and it spills forth from his lips, And the reason at the end of the day is that this is the preaching.

This is the message that god drives home. So people can know God. This is what it means to preach and demonstration of the spirit and of power. Not to be impressive. Or to make an impression. But to exalt the savior. And drive him home to the heart. That is the work.

Of the spirit of god. That, as i mentioned, at least, two of us here at preachers, But all of us here are hearers and i say, all of us, i'm hearing the sermon as i'm preaching a sermon, i'm under the word and under the ministry of christ, as it's going forth for you.

Because this is the spirit's work through the word, directing us to his son. What do we look for? In the preaching of the word are we talkative? Are we simply looking for the next debate? The next bit of information, Or is everything that we learn everything. We know everything we seek driving us back to this point right here, christ, and him crucified.

Are we impatient? To preach jesus christ. I love a statement about from Charles Spurgeon. When people criticized him. Bordering too much allegory and reading the old testament and finding things there that weren't necessarily there and it's all about jesus. His response was glorious. I'd rather find christ where he's not the missing where he is.

Is that our heart? Is that our aim, our goal, our desire, In the preaching of the word. In the hearing of the word, whether you're preaching or not, are you praying this way? Are you praying the holy spirit? Into the preacher's heart. So that he would be obsessed with christ said, that's what spills out of his heart and his mouth.

And that's what you hear. That's what you receive. Or are we simply focused on our own things? Well. That takes us from the means in verses 1 through 5 to the matter. Now, the matter of already said, what's the matter of the preaching? What is god actually told us.

What is god actually given us? Jesus christ. How is this different? And how does this advance things? When we talk about the matter in verse 6 down through 11, What paul is actually doing here, is he's challenging them and he's challenging us to say, you consider, what's actually at your fingertips.

Have you considered what you actually know? What god has actually revealed concerning christ, and where it comes from. Now i'm going to trust i'll jump ahead a little bit and pull back the thread of thought through the text. But have you ever heard the words of verse 9 before?

I is not seen nor ear heard nor entered in the heart of man, the things which god has prepared for those who love him. And how do we apply a text like that? And don't we often say heaven's going to be better than we can imagine. Heaven's going to be greater.

Then we could possibly think. And anything that could enter into our hearts. It's not revealed yet, but it will be, and it'll be great and we can't wait to get there. Now, some people go down that track and basically do exactly what the Corinthians do in a different way.

How is that place going to be so great? Well. I like golf. Maybe i'll have a golf course in the sky. First funeral that my father-in-law preached. That actually the, the family was saying that the little boy who had died actually. Was sitting on jesus's lap pilling video games.

Or is it a muslim paradise? Which i guess appeals to Muslim men, primarily, you know, all the women you ever want. All the things, all the stuff you ever desired? Better than we can imagine. Well, maybe we know better. I hope so. I trust. So We don't want those things.

I mean, i trust soak as the groans when i give these examples too. But when we look, To glory, what do we want? We want to see jesus. As he is, we want to be liken. And that is good. That's

in line. With verses. One through five, the means of preaching focuses on Jesus Christ, but he realized this text actually says something more magnificent than that.

With the matter. Because notice if I can skip to verse 10 then pull our way back through the details, I is not seen or ear heard or entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love him. But But God has revealed them to us.

He's not talking. In other words about a future, heavenly glory that you can barely imagine. He's actually talking about something that you have access to today. What is this great thing? That I is not seen or ear heard nor entered in the heart of man. That God has revealed.

I mean, we should be, if we're listening to this and thinking about it saying, I can't wait. Give me this information. Give me this subject matter. That only God can give in what is it? We'll notice that we go back to verse 6. What he's actually saying is, what God has told you about his son.

You couldn't learn these things anywhere else. People just can't make this stuff up. And I'll explain why in just a moment. But notice what he says, we speak in wisdom, to those who are mature. Yet we have a different quality of wisdom. A different kind of wisdom, a different source for this wisdom.

Preaching is the means that we hear it, but the matter is something God has revealed. It doesn't come as he says, by the wisdom of this age, know the rulers of this age who are coming to nothing.

Where are they? All the greatest thinkers of Paul's day. Can we name the best philosophers of his time? Or the statesman, maybe a few of us, you know, something about history. Can dig deep. But where are they? And yet, here we are still reading Paul. Centuries later. And why?

Because Paul has something to offer us. That all worldly, wisdom can never give you. Now, it's interesting. I think, you know, you're talking about the wisdom of the world, wisdom of the world is basically me first. I'm good compared to other people, and if you want religion, great. That's what it comes down to different forms.

Different manifestations. But this will never give you the one thing you really need to know. And that is the Lord himself. But I'm amazed, you know, as I'm saying this I'm thinking of one of my wife's relatives who used to be a Baptist pastor. And he ended up abandoning his profession of Christ and leaving the Christian faith and getting a PhD in psychology.

And as he got his PhD, most of the rest of the Christian was faint. What most of the rest of the family was Christian by can say that right? And basically, his attitude was, I've got the PhD. And you're a bunch of imbeciles. I know. I've gained wisdom, I've gained understanding or at least I have enough understanding to tell people.

That I don't know anything. But I'm going to make sure that, you know, you don't know anything either. And, you know, My response at least was I got the exact opposite out of my PhD work. You know you study everything man has to offer you go as far as you can as the Lord of labels you to do.

And what do you realize at the end if you're actually paying attention? I have more questions at the end than when I started with. If I learn anything, I can ask more questions and I need to ask. And we realized that mere human wisdom, mere human learning. If that's all we want.

That's all we chase after we will come up dry I mean, you got to ask yourself the question. If i'm just living for the wisdom of this world, if i'm just living for the things of this world. What next? Well, i've got these other plans. This other thing i want to pursue.

Okay? What next Well, something else what? Next we keep asking the question. Eventually i'm going to say, i don't know. Yeah, because your life is going somewhere, there's more to life than just the next best thing. There's more to life than just pursuing what you want now pursuing all of your own desires because one day You're going to die.

One day you're going to come up dry and that thought is not meant to depress you but meant to drive you back to the message. Paul is giving. What is the matter? I don't mean what's wrong. What's the subject matter? What's he's talking about? What's he getting at? That's so important and so profound.

Notice we speak the wisdom of god in a mystery. The hidden wisdom. Which God ordained before the ages for our glory so children. What is mystery mean? You think of something as a mystery maybe you mean it's confusing? It's inexplicable, it's mysterious. But god's word means something a little bit different.

What god actually means is something you couldn't know, unless God told you. A mystery is something that was hidden and god's heart so to speak and god's mind, it's counsel. And now paul says, we are speaking a mystery. Which was hidden and now god is revealed. So there's good news.

God has something to say to you. God has a word to speak to you. And his word is something that only he can tell you. Now, we connect the dots. Why in preaching as the means of knowing god, Is paul actually saying, I purposed in my heart to make nothing known among you, except jesus christ and him crucified.

Because jesus christ and him crucified is the mystery. That only god could tell you about. And you realize what this is going to mean, is we're pushing through this text. Is that? If we didn't have bibles. We wouldn't have jesus. I taught a class at our church recently, a children were getting ready to profess their faith.

And uh, tried to make things simple. And one of the things that i came back to here, at this particular point was No bible. No christ. No christ. No god. You need god to tell you. And for you, and i at least. That means we need this book. Because this is where god has told us.

This is where the spirit has spoken as we'll see in a moment. And these are the things this book, this message about jesus christ things that could never enter your imagination or your heart. Unless god said, so We realize what a glorious. Message we have. In the scriptures. Concerning jesus christ things which are hidden from the foundation of the world.

Now, god is just open the doors. Let the light shine out and and come full force upon us. You see why paul is obsessed with christ? I don't want to speak about anything else. You shouldn't want to hear. Anything else unless it's connected to this, Knowing god through his son, jesus christ.

God has revealed these things to us. By his spirit. What's so great about it? Well. God is very holy. And exalted. And you are very lowly and sinful. And, Offending, god is a problem. God is infinite in his majesty and glory to the point that even as we talked about in Sunday school, some of us We can barely comprehend what he has revealed.

And barely wrap our minds around what he said. How can we deal with this god? God as it were in the new testament says, i have an answer for you. God, so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. The eternal son equal with the father. Why did jesus need to be god?

Because as god he's worthy to save us, Only as god, could he match the infinite character, the god against whom? We've sinned Why did he have to be a true human being? Because god can't suffer. God can't die. God can't obey. God can't do. What needs to be done.

Only god is worthy to save us, but only man is able to save us. If he were only, man, He wouldn't have the dignity, the value the worst to save a single human being in this room. Let alone. How many who saved over this entrance? But if he wasn't man, he just couldn't do it.

He couldn't obey, he couldn't suffer, he couldn't die. He couldn't do anything in our place. You know, we're talking this morning and Sunday school about how do we understand? Jesus is will is nature's his work knowledge. All these, these great profound things, But here's the payoff, here's the bottom line.

This is the mystery. That God alone. Could tell you about. I mean, this is why i said earlier who could make this stuff up Who could devise such a glorious solution to an insurmountable and unsolvable problem. Other than god. And now paul is saying to the Corinthians. He has it whereas he's verbally grabbing them by the scruff of the neck and saying.

Refocus your attention. Look to the preaching of the word understand why a purpose in my heart to preach nothing to you other than jesus christ. Because this is the subject matter. This is the great thing. He has revealed that no one else could tell you. How can you be preoccupied with anything else?

In other words, As we think about the matter that god has revealed the mystery concerning his son. That i has not seen ear heard or entered in the heart of man. God has revealed them to us Do we retain a sense of awe and wonder? At the gospel of jesus christ.

And one beautiful thing about the lord's supper, which we observe today. Is that it puts our gaze back on the savior, doesn't it? Rhythmically regularly. And it tells us basically unless i feed on him by faith unless he is the life of my soul, just as my bread and my drink are for the life of my body.

I die. And i feast on him that i may be saved. Behold. Dear friends as you come to the lord's, supper the great subject matter. Of god's mystery. Let us feast on him by faith. Let us rejoice in him. And by the way, one application, i'd be remiss, not to make.

Is that? We need to know our bibles. We need to read them daily. We need to read the whole bible regularly. We need to search it asking god to show us the glory of his son. We ought to read it in our families, read it in our churches. Because here is the mystery god reveals That we couldn't know any other way.

I won't go through all the details here, but Notice as God has revealed them. To us through his spirit, what he's doing is, he's referring to the spirit's work objectively. The spirit is the author of the bible. The spirit authors god's words. And we need to hear them. And he alone searches all things.

Even the deep things of god, the mystery that's hidden that couldn't be revealed. Unless god told you the spirit's qualified. This spirit, knows it. The spirit can tell you what you need to

know. And he has, Which is underscoring the points i've made about the word. For what man knows the things of man, except the spirit of man, which is in him.

Even though even so no one knows the things of god, except the spirit of god, now we have received not the spirit of the world. We've seen what that looks like but the spirit who is from god, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by god.

Do you want to hear the spirit's voice? Searches word. Do you want to receive the subject matter? God speaks about above all others. Look for christ. Well, the third and last thing, just the last few verses here is the mover. And i think we're already getting there. But what's going on here?

Is something more than just what god says. So the gospel is god's testimony to his son. Which he drives into our hearts, by the holy spirit, verses one through five. The the great means is the preaching of christ. The subject matters, this mystery that god has revealed to us, but notice i said there's something objective here.

There's something in which the spirit is is telling us something that we need to know about jesus christ. But is that enough? Is that all we need? Are we just talkative? Do we just say? This is interesting information. This is an interesting intellectual endeavor to talk about the two natures of christ and all these great things about him.

Or does it dig deeper? Does it touch us more nearly You see we actually need one teacher. Who teaches us in two ways? The one teacher we need is the holy spirit. And he teaches us in two ways. He teaches us by telling us what we need to know.

The subject matter of the bible in jesus christ. And he teaches us. By enabling us to know it. Enabling us to receive it and to know it there. I don't just mean. Getting more information. But i mean children again like you know your brother like you know your sister like, you know, your parents What paul is saying is so you need to know your god.

Though, you've not seen him. Though, you've not. Seen jesus christ in the flesh. You need to hear his voice in the preaching. You need to receive what the spirit testifies to him. And you need to actually. Know him. That's why this is about knowing God. This, by the way, is going to pull us into all.

The practical day-to-day problems of the Corinthian church. Maybe by analogy in ways that can touch our lives as well. But notice what he says these things, we also speak this mystery not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but with the holy spirit teaches comparing spiritual things with spiritual So what he's getting at is you're comparing yourselves with each other.

At least, i'm not like that sinner over there. At least i go to church twice on the lord's day. At least i'm doing family worship. Someone else is not and paul is basically saying stop it. Stop comparing yourselves, among yourselves, stop comparing worldly, things, and worldly, things, compares, spiritual things with spiritual things.

What do you mean? Well, i think what he's getting at is the spirit doesn't simply teach you. The spirit is within you. If i can back up, i know i have verses 12 and 13 as a division, but notice, it's not just that we've heard from the spirit. We have received Not the spirit of the world but the spirit who is from god.

Why do we know these things? Why do we believe in jesus christ? Because the spirit is in us. We've received him, his testimony, as it were penetrates, the soul, it digs into the soil, it puts roots. There it forms christ in us so that we actually know him. We actually love him.

And when he's telling them to compare spiritual things with spiritual things, He's saying if you really are born of the spirit then think like it and act like it. You know, i i think it's amazing. You know this struck me recently and in in the work that i'm i've been doing as an elder in our local church.

How we always think of the Corinthian church as this horrible far-off example that maybe we give to seminary students just so that they're glad that whatever church they passed or they have those problems. People getting drunk at the Lord's supper i mean come on. This is this is outlandish stuff.

Uh, but you know, When you start thinking about what's actually going on? Uh, we have had people In recent times that try to iron out a dispute and and end up threatening to take each other to court. And we quote paul and say why not rather let yourselves be wronged why not let rather let yourselves be cheated pretty blunt you know and straightforward does that mean you know elders don't have something to do and and rectify a situation?

No. But what's your disposition? Are you just going to insist on your rights to the nth degree? Or if it brings reconciliation and peace or you're willing to let it go? And, and we've had people even do that. And and what happens? You quote, the verse and immediately, we are so good at doing this.

We say why doesn't apply my case? Well that's funny because the last 10 people i mentioned that too said the same thing. I guess it doesn't apply to anybody's case. Hmm, maybe. Something's wrong, right? Compare spiritual things with spiritual. Why? Because when you're simply thinking about yourselves and putting yourselves, first, there will be conflict children, isn't this really the reason why you have fights among yourself?

You gotta insist your right. It's simple but is day-to-day and it happens. And what's the way out? You need to learn to think as young spiritual people. Adults, we need to do this too. And what he's saying is, there's a reason why this is so urgent because the natural man the unconverted person, the person, without the spirit.

He doesn't receive the things of the spirit of god for their foolishness to him. Nor can he know them. Because there's spiritually discerned. He's not saying a non-Christian can't pick up the bible. Read the book and say, okay christians, believe jesus christ is the son of a living, god.

I did it. What he says. No, he means, no, really, no actually received. No god have something go beyond the talkative beyond the head into the heart. And he basically says, remember where you've come from because with someone devoid of the spirit, that's never going to happen. You know, i remember vividly again, talking to a friend after a philosophy class in college and we had to walk a mile off campus to get to our cars.

So we'd walk together and he's not a christian and i was a christian and he was interested because in class i was defending the doctrine of original sin and he asked me, are you a christian And he was thrilled to find someone different than him. That had a different opinion about who god was who man was what everything's like And i remember very vividly.

The first time i explained to him why jesus died on the cross. That god made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of god in him. That one had to be God. That one had to be man and praise god for this glorious solution.

You know, what is exact response was literally these words. That's foolishness. Kind of chilling, isn't it? You know, my response was Bible saw you coming. That's exactly how god said you

would respond. And won't even that show you. How desperately you need the? Holy spirit. How desperately you need a change of heart.

The bible's describing you exactly as you are, if that describes you today. That's not just theoretical. Will you listen? Will you wake up? Will you hear will you see the depths of your knee? Will you flee from yourself into the arms of jesus christ? But christian you too. Flee from yourself into the arms of jesus christ.

Don't forget. That if we simply think according to the principles of this world, We sort of regress back where we started. And don't be surprised. If it leads to confusion to conflict a problems. But then he says, He who is spiritual judges, all things. Yet he himself is rightly judged by no one but who has known the mind of the lord that he may instruct him but we have the mind of christ.

What's he getting at that? Can sound a little bit enigmatic, or or difficult to think through. But what he's really saying is this in the preaching of the word i wanted to, to make known Christ, you alone. Here's my focal point. Here's the means you need. The matter, is, the mystery that god had hidden before the foundation of the ages.

Now, he's revealed it to you. And now corinthians the end result is what do you do with it? Well, you look to the spirit who actually moves your heart to know God. You have sound judgment, you have everything you need for spiritual discipment. If you have god in christ, If you have the word and the spirit of god directing you, why do you need to go anywhere else?

So, What do we do with this? What's the bottom line? Well. My negative is, let us not be talkative. We may talk about the things of the lord, but let me put it this way. What good is it? If we can defend the idea that god is elected some to everlasting life and predestinated them to glory and passed by others.

If we do not make our calling and election, sure. What good is it? If we can argue, why our children should be baptized and should be church members. If we do not lay hold of the triune god who puts his name on them and on us in baptism. Teaching them teaching us to have god as our father, jesus is our savior.

The holy spirit in our hearts. What good is it? For us to argue up and down about the proper relationship of the church and the state. And how the law of god should apply to civil government. If we are not living and loving submission to god, And obedience to his law by his spirit.

You see what i'm really doing? I can keep going through the whole system of theology through any practical question through any issue that you have. And you see what i'm saying is, is not that any of the questions are illegitimate, but they can be misplaced mispurpose misdirected, Let us come back to the center.

Fundamentally the million dollar question for every single one of you. Is, do you know god? Do you use the means to know? God. Do you seek to come to the preaching of the word to hear the voice of christ? Are you impatient to hear about this subject matter? The mystery god has hidden from foundation of the world and now has revealed in your hearing it today.

And you look to the spirit. Daily continually to move, you From the heart. To know. The god. Who knows you? May God add his blessing to his word. Let us pray. Father in heaven, we do bless you. We thank you for revealing such glorious. Things about your son. And we thank you that you have not left us.

Simply to hear the words. But to receive the spirit who drives them home. Help us, lord. To look to jesus christ. To aim at nothing less or more than his glory. And bless us as we continue to worship in christ's name, we pray. Amen.