God's True and Complete Revelation
Scripture: 1 Corinthians 2:6-16
Code: 80-412

It was a couple of weeks ago that I managed to give an introduction to a message to you, and never got to the message. It was on a Sunday when I was talking a little bit about the idea of whether or not we are void of the Holy Spirit because we don't claim to have the sign gifts and speak in tongues and believe in miracles. That has been the sort of, I guess, accusation you could say, post-Strange Fire Conference. People have criticized me and us for not having fresh revelation from the Holy Spirit, not hearing the voice of God. not seeking new revelation whether it's prophecy understandable, or tongues not understandable. It has been suggested and it's been pretty aggressive lately that somehow all of us who take the position we do that the sign gifts ceased with the Apostolic age are literally setting aside the ministry of the Holy Spirit and we're operating in some…some intellectual world where we worship the Bible but have no real connection to the Spirit of God.

So a couple of weeks ago I tried to dispel that a little bit by looking at 1 John 2:20 to 27, and you may remember that. It would be a good message for you to get a copy of if you haven't heard it or downloaded it off the Grace To You website. But that is the accusation that if you're not hearing voices, meaning the voice of God, or the voice of the Holy Spirit, or you're not having some somewhat miraculous or supernatural revelation coming to you, either audibly or inaudibly, either as an impulse or some kind of intuitive feeling, or some kind of experience, somehow you're disconnected from the Holy Spirit.

Now it was a long time ago, and you may not remember this, that I introduced you to a German heretic who died in 1834 by the name of Schleiermacher. He's important in the history of theology because this notion of personal revelation and sort of individual messages coming from God intuitively on the inside of people really was invented, at least a modern version of it, was invented by this German heretic.

One writer says of Schleiermacher, and I think this sort of sums up his contribution, he started a Movement and that is fair to say…he started a Movement that led away from the faith of authority and assumed the Christian consciousness or feeling as the source of knowledge. In other words, he led away from external authority, from the authority of the Word of God and the authority of those who rightly interpreted and proclaimed the Word of God which is an external authority. Smeton(?) who is the writer, goes on to say that Schleiermacher placed the authoritative expression of the Holy Spirit inside the believer rather than outside the believer. And just hearing that the other day I realized that that's really a simple way to understand this issue. The result of that, according to this writer, is that

you end up with nothing but guesses at the truth. If we are supposed to come to truth inside of us, then we're left to wonder whether it is in fact the truth or not.

Now we have always believed, and the evangelical church and the faithful church, has always believed that the truth is outside of us, that divine revelation is outside of us, that the Word of God is outside of us. And that it is objective and that it is contained in 66 books of the Bible. And there are no guesses necessary as to whether or not we have the Word of God, the message from heaven.

Those few weeks ago when we talked about this, I pointed out to you that it is the mark of a true Christian. It is the mark of a true Christian to love the Word of God, to love the truth. That's just what it means to be a believer. And we saw that back in Psalm 119 where the Psalmist says it's sweeter than honey in the honeycomb and it's more precious than gold, yes than much fine gold. And we saw it again in Psalm 119 that massive tribute to the Word of God which reaches its peak at verse 97, which says, "O how I love Your Law." It is part and parcel of the work of God…let me put it that way, the work of God in the life of the believer to generate a love for Scripture. Salvation requires a love for Christ. It requires a hatred of sin. It requires faith in the revelation of God in Scripture. And it requires a love for Scripture that is internal, to motivate the believer internally toward the Scripture to understand it, to obey it, and to proclaim it. That is why in 2 Thessalonians 2:10 we have a picture of the coming of Christ and the final judgment and judgment will fall on those people who do not have the love of the truth.

So let me mark it out again for you. Where true conversion takes place, there will be a love for the Word of God. There will be a hunger and thirst for the Scripture, for the Bible. There will be that desire that is similar to babies desiring milk, that they may grow. There will be the confession that Peter gives as we'll see in a few weeks in John 6, when Jesus said, "You won't also go away, will you?" And Peter says on behalf of the rest, "To whom shall we go? You and You alone have the words of eternal life."

So mark it down. One of the components of salvation is a desire for the Word of God. It's like being human, when you're human you have a desire for food, natural food, bread, if you will in the biblical sense, but if you're spiritually reborn, you have a desire for spiritual food which is contained in Scripture. So it is not alien nor is it somewhat incidental to the Christian's life and experience to have a hunger for the Word of God. You heard that in the testimony in the baptism again tonight. This…this love for the Word of God, this desire for the Word of God, this need to be in the Word of God, to read it and to understand it, that's part and parcel of the appetite of the new creation. Okay?

So when God saves someone, they hate sin and they love righteousness. They hate themselves and they love Christ. They hate error and they love truth, and that truth is contained within Scripture and it is external to the believer, not internal to the believer. And we were saying that few weeks ago that we live in a post-modern world where truth has somehow been defined as whatever you think it is,

whatever you feel it is, whatever you want it to be. It has gone internal because it's much more convenient to be only responsible to your own whims and your own desires and your own wishes and your own will and your own idea than it is to be that of any other person, or any other external authority. So it's inevitable that that will be popular, it's just not legitimate.

This plays into the hands of the Charismatic Movement which says that the work of the Holy Spirit is internal, in you. That He is disclosing Himself revealing, speaking, saying things internally. And you need to be in touch with that. And if you're not in touch with that, you're caught up with what they will actually call the dead letter and not the living Spirit.

Now we answered that, and I'll give you just a reminder of that so you have it in mind, go to 1 John chapter 2 and verse 20, we have an anointing, all of us, you have an anointing from the Holy One who is Christ, and you all know, you all know…what do you know?...I've not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie is of the truth. And then down in verse 27, "As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you and you have no need for anyone to teach you, but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and not a lie, just as it is taught you, you abide in Him."

What happens when you become a believer is the Holy Spirit takes up residence in you and makes the Scripture come alive. He becomes your teacher. The truth isn't in you, the Spirit is in you, the truth is outside of you, the Spirit who is in you gives you the ability to understand the truth that is outside of you. Verse 24, "As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning." If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you will also abide in the Son and in the Father. What you heard from the beginning was the divine revelation of God that came to the Apostles called in the book of Acts the Apostles Doctrine.

So we looked at the initial reality that if I'm not getting constant updated revelation from the Holy Spirit, if I'm not getting private e-mail or texting from heaven all the time to keep me up to speed, somehow I'm disconnected from the Holy Spirit is a deception. The reality is if you think you're getting that, you are being systematically disconnected from the Holy Spirit who speaks in and through His Word. If you follow the rabbit trails of your own intuition and your own imaginary experiences and imaginary voices and impulses, it will inevitably lead you away from the Word of God. It will lead you away from the Word of God because it seems more fresh, more dynamic, more relevant, more personal and it's always going to be tied to your own desires in some way because it's being cultivated in your own mind. It is more likely to lead you away from the truth and toward the truth.

We have to trust the Word of God. We have to trust the fullness, sufficiency and completeness of the Word of God. Now there are Charismatics today, some of them rather scholarly, as scholarly as they get, who are denying the sufficiency of Scripture, or saying that's not enough. But that would not be Scripture's own testimony.

Now where I was trying to go a few weeks ago I'll go tonight. Open your Bible to 1 Corinthians 2 and I just want to talk you through this a little bit. This is kind of a personal, pastoral talk, if you will, to help you to understand this important truth. I don't want anybody intimidated. I've met people in all through the ministry here who felt intimidated in a Charismatic environment because they didn't speak in tongues, felt intimidated in a Charismatic environment because they were sick and never got well, felt intimidated, felt second-class because they weren't legitimately hearing voices from heaven. I've had people write me letters recently and say, "I've been in that Movement for years and years, I never spoke in tongues, I never had a prophecy, I never saw a miracle, I never fell down backwards and I always felt second-class."

Well even worse, if people are telling you that because you're not getting these kinds of experiences and revelations, you're not connected to the Holy Spirit. That's a very frightening reality. You don't need to live with that. You don't need to live with that. I just spoke this morning to a man who was kind enough to come up and introduce himself who is new in our church who is overwhelmed by the reality of divine truth coming to him here through the Word of God after twenty years of what he called nonsense by people who claimed to be Apostles and prophets and people who are being knocked over and supposed signs and wonders and always feeling left out. You don't need to feel like a second-class Christian because you're not getting these feelings that are imaginary revelations because you have in your hand the true revelation.

Now I want you to look at 1 Corinthians chapter 2 because this is a good chapter to kind of get a handle on understanding this. God's power comes through God's wisdom and God's wisdom comes through Scripture. That's just a little pattern. God's power, transforming power, saving power or sanctifying power, enabling power all of God's power comes through God's wisdom and God's wisdom is revealed in Scripture. There's no power in an intellectual vacuum. You need to know the truth and the truth empowers you. God saves but not apart from the gospel. God sanctifies but not apart from the word of God. God comforts but not apart from the revelation of truth that gives us reason for comfort.

So God's power to transform, God's power to change comes through God's wisdom and if we're going to be changed, then that wisdom has to be readily available to us, it can't be some whimsical kind of experience that you may or may not have or you may have to guess at. And so God's power again comes through God's wisdom and God's wisdom is revealed in holy Scripture. That's foundational. And that's what we're going to see here in this chapter. The Bible is the Holy Spirit speaking. The Bible is the Holy Spirit speaking. It isn't in the Bible that the Holy Spirit spoke only, although He did. It is through the Bible that He now speaks. Okay? That's really important for you to understand. The Holy Spirit spoke when Scripture was written, but the Holy Spirit speaks when Scripture is read and Scripture is understood. So He continues to speak through His Word. And we know, as we said last time, we know that this is the Word of God, we know this is the Word of the

Holy Spirit. So we know we are hearing the Spirit speak through His Word. We have an anointing, the resident truth teacher lives in us who makes the Word live…the very one who causes us to love the Word, also causes us to understand the Word.

Now verses 1 to 5, Paul says, “When I came to you, brethren, I didn’t come with superiority of speech or of wisdom,” meaning like every other orator, and every other speaker, and every other influencer, and every other politician, every other teacher and every other guru, everybody who comes along with their own ideas. I didn’t come that way. I didn’t come as an orator who was more interesting, more dramatic, more dynamic that other speakers. I didn’t come to you with human wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God.

Paul says I bring God’s message, I bring God’s message and it is disconnected from the messages of the world. It has nothing to do with superiority of speech or human wisdom. Then he goes on to talk about the very heart of that message, the cross, Jesus Christ, Him crucified. Again it isn’t about the power of the orator. I was with you in weakness and fear and much trembling. My message, my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power so that your faith wouldn’t rest on the wisdom of men but on the power of God.

Now again, the power of God comes through the wisdom of God and the wisdom of God is made available in the Scripture. It is contained in that external Word that is outside of us, 66 books that make up the Bible. At the time Paul was writing, of course, the Old Testament had been brought together, those books had been completed, 39 books, and the books of the New Testament were in process. But the principle is the same. I don’t come to you with human wisdom. I don’t come to you with cleverness of speech. I come bringing the testimony that comes from God concerning Jesus Christ so that your faith would not rest in the wisdom of men but on the power of God.

This wisdom is not even humanly discoverable. Let’s go to verse 6 for a minute, yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature, *teleios*, complete. And that, I think, refers to those who are regenerate, those who have been made complete in Christ. A wisdom, however, not of this age, nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away. Paul says, “I speak a wisdom that is not connected to the wisdom of the world. A contrast is between the Word of God, the testimony of God, and the testimony of men. What is divine and what is human. What is non-Christian and what is Christian.

James talks about the distinction between wisdom that is from below and wisdom that is from above. One is demonic and sensual, and the other is divine and spiritual. That’s the contrast that Paul wants to establish. We come, Paul says, with divine wisdom. All right? I just want to establish that foundation. Admittedly he’s already said in chapter 1, “This is foolishness to the world, it is not only not of the world but it is foolishness to the world.” Even to the Jews, it is a stumbling block and to the Gentiles foolishness. He even uses the word moronic.

So Paul introduces us then to divine wisdom. It is not of this age, not available by human inquiry. Even to the rulers of this age, the leaders of this age, the top minds, the great minds. You go back into chapter 1 and he talks about that. He talks about the fact that there are wise men, verse 20, there are scribes, there are the great debaters of this age. But all they do is spout folly and foolishness. Who were talking then, Paul says, about revelation that is the testimony of God coming down from heaven that is not from the world. And the rulers who are passing away, or another way to translate that, being rendered ineffective, being rendered useless, being rendered impotent, make no contribution to it. In fact, you could go further than that and you could borrow 2 Corinthians and be reminded again that not only is that wisdom not resident in the unregenerate but it's doubly unable to come from then because they're blinded by the God of this world who has blinded their minds. So unregenerate people, including yourself when you're in that condition, and even the rulers and the top leaders and the best minds and the debaters and the brilliant and the elite are not going to ever be a source for spiritual wisdom. All of that simply to remind you that it has to come down from heaven…it has to come down from heaven.

We are responsible to know it. We are responsible to believe it. We are responsible to live it, obey it, proclaim it, therefore it must be available to us, it must be clear to us and it in fact is.

Just following the flow here, come to verse 7, "We speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory, the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age, meaning the top people, the best, the brightest, none…none of the rulers of this age has understood, for if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

This is strong language. Paul says we're preaching truth, we know people don't understand it. We know the Jews didn't understand it or they wouldn't have crucified the Lord of glory. The Gentiles didn't understand it or they wouldn't have actually carried out the execution. We're speaking mystery. What does mystery mean? It doesn't mean what you think when you think of the word mystery, it means something hidden that is now revealed. Something unavailable. We're speaking secrets impossible for man to know until God reveals those secrets. Paul writes somewhat frequently about this concept of mystery. For example, in chapter 3 of Ephesians, verse 8, "To me the very least of all saints, this grace was given to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ." That means undiscernible, unattainable, undiscoverable. "And to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church, to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places." God is now putting on display the gospel which has been unknown to the world and even unknown in its full glory to the angels of heaven.

The secrets are known only to God and revealed by God when God chooses to reveal them and precisely to whom He chooses to reveal them. At the end of the book of Romans, we read in chapter

16 verse 25, “Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past.” Listen, “But now is manifested and by the Scriptures of the prophets according to the commandment of the eternal God has been made known to all the nations leading to obedience of faith.” The mystery is known and contained through the prophets those who wrote the Scripture in the Scripture.

This is just a foundational way to understand from this text what we’re talking about when we talk about the Bible. We’re talking about truth that cannot be known, is not attainable, is not available, is not discernable to the natural man, even the most erudite. It does not rise from their thinking, it is alien to them, it is the wisdom that is from God, it is the testimony, as he says in verse 1, of God, it is the wisdom that comes down from above. It is the mystery now unfolded. The mystery referring to the New Testament revelation which had been hidden until Christ and until the Apostles. Verse 7 says, “God has predestined that this would now be spoken to our glory.” Predestined to our glory. What does that mean? To our eternal blessing. It is a message that brings about eternal life and therefore eternal blessing.

So let me sum up. From eternity past, God in His sovereign decree and electing grace planned for us who believe in Christ eternal blessing. That eternal blessing would come to us when we believe the truth, the wisdom of God revealed in the New Testament which is the mystery unfolded. All human wisdom is nothing. All human wisdom makes no contribution to this. This is unavailable to man. This is provided only in Scripture and Scripture is understandable only to those who have the resident truth teacher, the Holy Spirit.

Verse 8 is very strong. “None…none of the rulers of this age has understood this.” Verse 9, “Just as it is written, taken from Isaiah, things which eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man all that God has prepared for those who love Him.” All that God has prepared is unavailable by empirical research, it is unavailable by intuition. You can’t see it and hear it, that’s empirical. You can’t feel it, as if it were in your heart, it’s unavailable.

God’s truth comes down from heaven and it is external to man, even the most erudite of men. It is outside of us. For those of us who are believers, however, the truth teacher has been placed inside of us.

Now we come…all of that just getting us to verse 10 because that’s where we want to go. We come to verse 10 and we see three aspects of this divine wisdom being deposited in our lives. Aspect number one, let’s call revelation…revelation. I’ll give you three terms, revelation, inspiration and illumination. Aspect number 1 is revelation. And that word is actually used, at least in a verb form there in verse 10, “For to us God revealed them through the Spirit for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God, for who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the Spirit of the

man which is in him, even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God."

Now that is talking about revelation. And by revelation, I don't mean the book of revelation, by revelation I mean that which is revealed from God. That's the content…the content, the truth itself. This is emphatic "For to us," that's emphatic position. To us is in the emphatic position. "For to us, the ones that God loved and that love Him, the ones predestined before the ages to eternal glory, to us God revealed them through the Spirit. To us is emphatic, not to the world's philosophers, not to the elite of the world, that's why Jesus says in Matthew chapter 11, "These things are hidden from the wise, the erudite, and revealed unto babes," He says that in Matthew 13:11 to 17 as well, this is revelation, God's revelation is given to us. It is the work of the Spirit to give us the divine mystery, to give us the revelation of God.

Why? Because He says, "The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God." I think whenever I read that of Romans 8:26 and 27 where it talks about the Spirit making intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered and that God knows the mind of the Spirit because He always prays according to the will of the Father. So the Trinity is perfect in its knowledge, so the Spirit is the agent who makes the truth of God known to us. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God, or the depths of God, verse 10. He alone is competent to reveal God to us. He alone searches the deep recesses of the divine nature.

There is not anything in God that the Spirit does not know, does not always know, has not always known. This is not distant knowledge, this is not discovered knowledge, this is immediate knowledge. This is innate knowledge. He knows the inmost perfections and purposes fully because He Himself is God. He knows the will of God because He is God and wills what the Father wills and what the Son wills. The Holy Spirit, as true of any member of the Trinity, is omniscient about Himself and therefore omniscient about God.

So the Spirit searches, this is a function of the Spirit, searching the depths of the knowledge of God and collecting the revelation of God to be deposited in our hands. It's an amazing truth. He compares it in verse 11 to a person who has self-consciousness, that's what distinguishes us from vegetables and animals. The man knows the thoughts of a man. The Spirit in the man knows the man. This is self-consciousness. And just as you're the only one who really knows what's going on in your mind, it's only you internally who know you fully, so it is the Spirit of God who knows God fully and perfectly. No one but a man's own spirit can know what passes in his mind, what passes through his mind, what occupies his mind can truly know his longings, his desires, his hopes, his ambitions, his fears. The Spirit of God then is the one who knows the deep realities, purposes, plans of God who knows perfectly the wisdom of God. And so he is the one searching all the depth of the true wisdom of God who then reveals them to us.

This is revelation. This is revelation. Revealed, *apokalupto*, the Apocalypses. The book of Revelation comes from that. It means to disclose something, to unveil something that has been hidden.

When you pick up your Bible, you have in your hand the revelation of the Spirit of God. You have…you have the Spirit disclosing to you all the deep secret things known only to Him. Revelation is the act of God by which He makes known to us what was otherwise unknown, totally undiscoverable, unavailable. And God does this in a free and voluntary act of love so that He can bring a redeemed humanity to salvation and sanctification and glorification for His own eternal glory. The Spirit then produces the revelation. The revelation is the actual content of Scripture. The Spirit brought the revelation.

The second thing is inspiration. This is the means by which the Spirit communicates the revelation by inspiration. Look at verses 12 and 13. “Now we have received not the Spirit of the world,” again reiterating this is divine, “but the Spirit who is from God so that we may know the things freely given to us by God which things we also speak not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

Now we don’t have the time to completely unpack all of that. You can read a little more detail on that in good commentaries on this particular portion of Scripture, but suffice it to say, He’s talking about the truth, the revelation in terms of its content in 10 and 11 and then in verses 12 and 13, here is the Apostle Paul saying, “We have received the Spirit who is from God so that we may know the things freely given to us by God which things we also speak not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit.”

So what is inspiration? It…listen to this…it is the Holy Spirit giving the Apostles. Can we say in verse 12, “We have received,” is a very strong testimony of apostolic authorship? We, that is we who are part of the Apostles and their associates who wrote the New Testament, that’s the primary representation of that pronoun, “We…we know the things freely given to us by God, namely the body of truth, the revelation, which things we also speak not in words taught by human wisdom, but, implied, in words taught by the Spirit,”…spiritual thoughts connected to spiritual words. So what is inspiration? It is taking the revelation and putting it in words…putting it in words. This is the vehicle that conveys the secret things of God, the depths of God known only to the Spirit of God. We have received the influence of the Holy Spirit in the process of inspiration.

More is said about this in the gospel of John in the Upper Room. You will remember some of these statements by our Lord, John 14:26, He says, “The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name,” He’s talking to His disciples, minus Judas, “He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.” Why was that important? Why was it important for the Holy Spirit to teach them all things and to bring everything to their remembrance, so they could…what?...so they could write it down. That’s the promise of inspiration.

In chapter 15 and verse 26, “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father,” that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, “He will testify about Me and you will testify also because you’ve been with Me from the beginning.” The Holy Spirit is going to come upon you and the Holy Spirit is going to reveal to you the truth and you are going to remember it and recall it and you’re going to write it down and give testimony to Me in that way.

Chapter 16 verse 13, “When He, the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth for He will not speak on His own initiative but whatever He hears He will speak. He will disclose to you what is to come.” The Holy Spirit will not only tell you what you will remember in the past, He will reveal to you what is coming in the future. This is the work of inspiration. The Apostles and those associated with them will be the instruments the Holy Spirit will use to write down truth…write down the truth that we have contained in Scripture. Spiritual thoughts, I think that’s a fair addition, coming through spiritual words. Things that we Apostles not only know, but we communicate. We speak not in words of human wisdom, but in words taught by the Holy Spirit. Spiritual truth through spiritual words, that’s why we say Scripture is God-breathed.

And to remind you how important that is, look at 2 Timothy 3:16, this is a critical benchmark passage. “All Scripture,” meaning just that, all Scripture, Old and New, “all Scripture is God-breathed.” A wonderful way to refer to the work of the Holy Spirit in inspiring the writers. It is inspired by God, *theopneustos* which connects God and Spirit or breath. All Scripture is inspired by God, all of it. And skipping down to verse 17, it provides all that a man of God needs to be complete, adequate, equipped for every good work. That I saying that all Scripture is from God, breathed out by God, implying the work of the Holy Spirit in inspiration and is sufficient to fully equip every person who is God’s own child completely.

Another verse that comes into the discussion is 2 Peter chapter 1 verse 21, “No prophecy,” that is no revelation, no word, verse 20, “no prophecy of Scripture,” so prophecy is connected to Scripture, prophecy meaning speaking, revealing, disclosing, no Scripture, we could say, was ever made by an act of human will. “But men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” They spoke from God, they wrote from God. So you have revelation, which is the body of truth that the Holy Spirit has taken, searching the deep things of divinity. And then you have inspiration which is the means by which the Spirit transmits that truth to paper, or to script. It’s written down.

Inspiration teaches that the holy writings, the Old Testament and the New Testament, are the very words of God, the very words of God through the Holy Spirit so that the Holy Spirit is the author of Scripture. And that could launch us into an entire study of inspiration and the work of the Spirit. The result of it is that the Scripture is authoritative. It is without error. It is comprehensive. It is complete. It is infallible. It is sufficient. Spiritual truths set forth in Spirit-given words. Spiritual truth in Spirit-given words, and so I would say again to you, “Listen, you who are committed to the Scripture are not out of

touch with the Holy Spirit, you're never more in communion with the Holy Spirit than when you're reading Scripture. Never.

That leads to a third and final aspect of the Spirit's ministry, illumination…illumination, verses 14 to 16. This is the final step. This is the fulfillment of Psalm 119:18, "Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Your Law." The revelation is the truth that the Spirit of God has determined to reveal, inspiration is the means by which it is transmitted to print and now we possess it. Illumination is the work of the Holy Spirit to make its meaning known. Illumination is the work of the Holy Spirit to make its meaning known, to make Scripture understandable. Even if we have a Bible, even if we have revelation bought down to us through inspiration, verse 14 reminds us, "A natural man doesn't accept the things of the Spirit of God, they are foolishness to him and he can't understand them because they're spiritually appraised."

We're reminded that even though we have the deep things of God, and even though they're given to us in print, and we hold it in our hands, in a natural condition it turns into foolishness. That's what was in chapter 1, the gospel is foolishness, it's a stumbling block. We understand that. The natural man can't grasp that because it's spiritually appraised, spiritually evaluated, spiritually understood. And he's spiritually dead.

"But…verse 15…he who is spiritual appraises all things, he who is spiritual appraises all things." Unregenerate people appraise nothing. They look at the Scripture, it's meaningless. Luther said, "Man is like a pillar of salt, like Lot's wife, like a log, like a stone. The believer, however, on the other hand is indwelt by the Holy Spirit and thus able to discern, to judge, to appraise. That means to rightly evaluate. People who show distain to the Scripture are just acting natural. This is how natural people act. They may have a certain respect for the Bible which they don't understand, they may even try to live up to some of its sort of normal sort of well-known moral laws or principles of honesty and decency. But they have no respect for it. They don't comprehend it. Even the best of men can't make a true judgment of Scripture. But he who is spiritual, that is he who has been given spiritual life and who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit makes a correct appraisal of everything. Boy, what a statement. You get it. You get it. See, it's what's so frustrating about living in the world, isn't it? We have all the answers. We get it. They don't. And it becomes even more dramatic how lost they are, the higher up you go. The higher up in the university echelons you go, the more you realize how lost they are. We get it and we are appraised by no one. That is a remarkable statement in verse 15. We are appraised by no one.

What does that mean? What that simply means is the world, even the elite of the world, are so unable to understand the Word of God that they can't value us the way we need to be valued. They can't even assess us. They don't understand us. They don't understand this so they don't understand us. An amazing statement. This is a blow to the wise men of the world. They can't appraise the Word of God accurately and they can't appraise the people of the Word of God accurately, they can't possibly

do that. Verse 16, “For who has known the mind of the Lord that He will instruct Him?” Isaiah 40:13. They don’t’ know God’s mind. Why? Because the only way you can know God’s mind is to know what God has revealed about His mind in Scripture, the deep things of the mind of God and the mind of Christ are revealed in Scripture. And if you are a natural person, and do not have life in Christ, and do not possess the Holy Spirit, you can’t understand the Scripture and you can’t understand the people who do understand the Scripture. You certainly can’t know the mind of the Lord. You certainly can’t imagine that you would instruct Him.

On the other hand, I love how this ends… “We have the mind of Christ.” It’s all so clear to us, isn’t it? We could fix the world, couldn’t we? We could fix it all. We could fix it all. The natural man has not the truth, has not the Spirit, can’t make a true judgment of the truth, can’t make a true judgment of the Holy Spirit, can’t make a true judgment of the people of the book, believers. They can’t evaluate us at all. To misjudge us is to misjudge Scripture. To misjudge Scripture is to misjudge Christ and misjudge God, for we represent the mind of Christ in the world. You misjudge us, you’ve misjudged Christ. No one can instruct the Lord, but we have the mind of the Lord, therefore no one in the world can instruct us. You can’t bring erudite, elite, knowledgeable unbeliever before me who can in one small way change how I view the world. He has nothing to offer to me. I have a complete understanding as revealed in Scripture.

The mind of God, its vastness is unfathomable, of course. But there is truth that has been gathered by the Holy Spirit from the depth of the nature of God. It has been revealed and it has been written down through the process of inspiration as the Bible writers wrote the very words the Spirit of God prompted them to write. We have those words in a book and we have the resident truth teacher, the anointing from God that teaches us all things. It’s a ridiculous accusation to say somehow if we’re not flying by the seat of our pants making crazy guesses about what’s going on in our minds, we’re detached from the Holy Spirit. Let’s get it right. The people chastening fantasies are detached from the Holy Spirit. The people studying this book are in communion with Him all the time. This is first-class Christianity and the only Christianity the Bible knows anything about.

Lord, again thank You for our time together tonight. We have hopefully been able to convey something of the wonder of what we have in our hands as Your Word, so deeply grateful for it. It daily our food, we never get enough of it, that’s why we’re here. And we know that’s why we’re here and we know that that’s why some people aren’t here because they have no hunger for this. They have no appetite for this. They’re sort of like that crowd we talked about this morning who were drawn by the sensational and the temporal and the external, and the superficial, the earthly and their own desires. But what draws us is the bread, the true bread that comes down from heaven, even Christ and the bread of the word that feeds our souls. How wonderful to think about the fact that in all the world we are the people of the truth and the natural man, no matter who he is, even the rulers of this age, the most elevated people, cannot rightly judge Your Word, therefore they cannot judge the truth, therefore they cannot rightly evaluate the people of the truth. But we evaluate all things because we

have Your mind revealed in Scripture. We thank You for the revelation, the content of truth, inspiration, that process by which it was written down and placed into our hands, and we thank You for the ongoing and regular work of illumination. Blessed Holy Spirit, thank You for living in us and opening the truth to us so that we understand and being appraised by no one rightly outside the Kingdom. We appraise all things rightly inside the Kingdom because we have Your Word. We are the people of the book and we are the people of the Spirit. May we celebrate that and may we be grateful for that immense gift of an indwelling Spirit. Something at a dimension that even the saints in the past didn’t know, for Jesus said to His disciples that night in the Upper Room, “He has been with You, He will be in you.” That goes for us.

Thank You, blessed Holy Spirit, for Your work in us. Thank You, Father, for the plan and thank You,, Christ, for sending Your Spirit to us. Use us, Lord, as we proclaim this book and its truth to those around us. Be honored in that, we pray, in Christ’s name. Amen**.**

Available online at: http://www.gty.org
COPYRIGHT (C) 2015 Grace to You
You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright).