

1Cor 2:10 – 3:9

Oct 14, 2018

Review

There are five contrasts or comparisons between man and God in 1Cor 2:6-16

1. The wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God.
2. Natural knowledge and Spiritual knowledge.
3. Instruction given to those who are babes in Christ and the mature person in Christ.

This week we will look at the next two contrasts

4. The spirit (spiritual forces) of this world and God's Spirit.
5. The carnal natural man and the person filled with the Holy Spirit.

Comparison of two worlds

1Cor 2:10-16 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. 11 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. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, 13 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. 14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. 15 But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. 16 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.

Two Spirits

Spirit of this world

Eph 2:1-3 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 2:3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

Spirit of God

The Spirit searches the deep thoughts of God and reveals them to us, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God. (1Cor 2:10-12)

Two kinds of people

The natural (psuchikos) man

psuchikos = psuche in Greek is translated soul; it is the principle of physical life which man shares with all living creatures. This is the man who lives as if there was nothing beyond this physical life, the unsaved man, who walks according to the course of this world (Eph 2:1-3). He cannot receive the things of the Spirit because he does not have the Spirit dwelling within him.

The spiritual (pneumatikoi) man

pneumatikoi = pneuma is the word for spirit; this is what makes a man different from the rest of creation and able to fellowship with God. This is the believer who has the Holy Spirit, who has discernment and can judge and evaluate things with God's insights.

We have the mind of Christ

Rom 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. (Rom 8:3-9)

Rom 8:27 and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, ...

Heb 10:16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them ... I will put my laws upon their heart and on their mind will write them

Col 3:2-3 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Not understanding the nature of ministry (1Cor 3:1-9)

1Cor 3:1-9 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, 3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? 4 For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not mere men? 5 What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. 7 So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. 8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

They are still "baby" Christians (1Cor 3:1-4)

Paul fed them with milk and not solid food because they weren't able to receive it.

He did not push infant believers beyond their abilities, giving them teaching suited to their development. The problem was that by this time they were still not ready, they had not grown to the point of receiving solid food.

Paul taught them according to their ability, they were -

v. 1 "Men of flesh" (sarkinos = fleshly,) / infants (babies) in Christ.

Those who have just been converted will be infants, this is normal. However, growth and development are expected of the maturing Christian.

"Fleshly" and you cannot help it (Rom 7:5, 14).

v. 3 "fleshly" = (sarkikos = made of flesh, having the nature of flesh).

"Fleshly" and you can but do not help it

Paul uses the term "flesh" to describe the sinful nature

Rom 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts. (Eph 2:3)

Gal 5:13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

Gal 5:19-21 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, ...

His evidence is the jealousy and strife between them, the source of their divisions.

You can tell a person's relationship with God by looking at his relationship with others. When a person is quarrelsome, argumentative, and divisive, he is not walking in relationship with God. A person who knows God will have relationships marked with unity, tolerance and love.

Christians are expected to grow into maturity (1Cor 3:1-4)

We never outgrow the need for the nourishing milk of God's Word (1Pt 2:2).

We cannot grow strong unless we also have the "solid food" (Heb 5:12-14; Mt 4:4).

We also grow by exercising (1Tim 4:6-8).

Age is no guarantee of spiritual maturity.

How to view gospel workers (1Cor 3:5-9)

Servants (diakonoi) a term which originally meant a table waiter, it came to be used of generally lowly service; a slave or servant. The term stresses the lowly character of the service rendered and it ridicules the tendency to make much of preachers.

The agriculture metaphor

Paul planted - he founded (planted, evangelized) the Corinthian church.

Apollos watered – he taught (discipled) the Corinthian church.

Unity between the workers - 1Cor 3:8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one;

Neither the planter nor the water is important, they work together for one purpose.

The work of neither can be successful without the work of the other.

There must be no competing or comparing, for the Lord alone recognizes the work and gives the reward.

Each worker will receive appropriate rewards for their labor.

Focus should be on God

Three times in v. 9 the word "God" comes first. This puts emphasis on God's action and not the worker's efforts.

"God's fellow workers are we (we are partners working together for God);

God's field (farm, garden), God's building (edifice, or the process of maturation) are you."

Only God can make it grow!

"Without God, we cannot; without us, He will not."

References used:

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