

**Intro.** There’s a story about a proud young man who came to Socrates asking for wisdom. He walked up to the muscular philosopher and said, “O great Socrates, I come to you for wisdom.” Socrates recognized a pompous numbskull when he saw one. He led the young man through the streets, to the sea, and chest deep into water. Then he asked, “What do you want?” “Wisdom, O wise Socrates,” said the young man with a smile. Socrates put his strong hands on the man’s shoulders and pushed him under. 30 seconds later Socrates let him up. “What do you want?” he asked again. “Wisdom,” the young man sputtered, “O great and wise Socrates.” Socrates crunched him under again. 30 seconds passed, 35, 40. Socrates let him up. The man was gasping. “What do you want, young man?” Between heavy, heaving breaths the fellow wheezed, “Wisdom, O wise and wonderful...” Socrates jammed him under again 40 seconds passed. 50. “What do you want?” “Air!” the young man screeched. “I need air!” “When you want wisdom as you have just wanted air, then you will have wisdom.” (M. Littleton, *Moody Monthly*, June 1989, p. 29). One of the problems with the world today is that so few really want true wisdom, because to get it, you have to look to God & He calls you to surrender to Him & few are willing to do so. We’ve been studying 1 Corinthians & the “Growing Pains” the church experienced & how it was slowly killing the church. Paul offers a remedy to such problems as he exhorts us to “Look to the Wisdom of God.”

Theme: Unity toward God

Background: Paul had heard of divisions within the body of believers at Corinth & wrote to address it, offering a remedy of being united first & foremost around the cross of Christ, which is the wisdom of God.

➤ I want to give you 3 objects for looking to the wisdom of God as dependence upon His Spirit.

### **I. Depend on the Spirit of God for Divine Revelation (2:6-11)**

- “the mature” (2:6)—believers
- The wisdom imparted to believers is not the wisdom of this world, for that is man’s best effort at telling us how to live wisely today to prepare for tomorrow & it is “doomed to pass away”
- God’s wisdom is “secret & hidden” (2:7) from others, for the gospel is a mystery (once hidden but revealed by the Spirit to believers)
- “God decreed before the ages for our glory”—before time began, God planned how we would be redeemed & glorified (cf. Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-5; cf. 1 Peter 1:18-20)
- Not all things have been revealed by God, for “the secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law” (Deuteronomy 29:29)
- The rulers of this world don’t understand God’s wisdom, for if they had they wouldn’t have crucified Jesus, “the Lord of glory” (2:9)—Jesus is the one who reigns over all & though He was once-crucified He is risen
- 2:9 is probably a combination of Isaiah 64:4 & 65:17—Paul uses it in underscoring God’s wisdom, but he may also have in mind the believer’s future home in glory
- God has revealed these things to us by His Spirit, who searches everything, including the things of God (2:10)

Illus: 2:11 serves as an illustration—no one knows you like you know you, no matter how close you are to someone else. In the same vein, no one knows God better than Himself, the Spirit

### **II. Depend on the Spirit of God for Divine Inspiration (2:12-13)**

- What Paul says about what we’ve received applies to all Christians, but he may be using it specifically of what he & the other apostles had received (2:12)—that is, they had “received”

the Spirit to “understand that which was freely given by God” & “impart” (2:13) to others—this is the doctrine of inspiration (cf. 2 Timothy 3:16)

- Divine revelation is God making Himself known in a special way to man—visions, dreams, donkeys (cf. Balaam, Numbers 22), but divine inspiration is the Spirit moving men (prophets & apostles) to record the Word of God, using their personalities, backgrounds, style—divine inspiration is the clearest way God has revealed Himself to us

Illus: My sons like building things with Legos. Suppose I told them what I wanted them to build & they did it. They would do so because I revealed to them what they were to do. Now say I told them to build it & I told them to write it down & they did—step-by-step instructions, not only so they could follow it but so all their friends who wanted to build the same thing could follow it. I still revealed to them & their friends what I wanted, but they were inspired to write it down for others, so that you don’t merely depend on word of mouth—that’s the difference between simple divine revelation & divine inspiration

### **III. Depend on the Spirit of God for Divine Illumination (2:14-16)**

- “natural person” (2:14)—the regular man, the person without God—doesn’t accept the things of God, for they are foolish to him
- He cannot understand them, because he “is not able to understand them”—the person apart from God possesses spiritual inability (because he is dead in sins, Ephesians 2:1-3)
- The only way such things are understood is with the Spirit of God (2:14b)
- The spiritual person (person with the Spirit of God) judges or makes discernment on all things, because he/she is controlled by the Spirit as to what is right & wrong, but as long as they are following the Spirit (which always works in accordance with His Word), others won’t stand in judgment over them (as to what is right or wrong or at least not to stand over them in the final judgment)

Illus: I don’t know about you, but I enjoy touring caves. I’ve been in caves in both hemispheres, but possibly the most impressive is Mammoth Caves in Kentucky. You know how dark it gets in caves, because nearly every tour I’ve ever been on gets you well below the surface of the earth only to turn the lights off for a few seconds. In its most natural setting, no one can appreciate the beauty of God’s creative design in caverns, because they look at it in darkness. But the more light you shed on it, you can marvel at its beauty & see it for what it is. In the same way, people without the Holy Spirit look at the Bible as another book because they are in spiritual darkness. But whenever the Spirit works in someone’s life to regenerate them, they begin to study the Scriptures & see the beauty of what God intended

- Paul quotes Isaiah 40:13 to say that no one instructs the Lord & adds that the mind of Christ has been given to believers in terms of understanding what God wants us to believe & do

**Conc.** I heard about a boy who made a commitment to read through the Bible & did it. His dad asked him the following day, “Are you going to read the Bible tonight?” “No, sir” the boy replied, “I finished it.” The next morning he came to the breakfast table & the father asked, “Are you going to eat breakfast today?” “Yes, sir,” the son replied, “I’m starving.” “But you already had breakfast yesterday & finished it. Why would you eat again?” the father asked. “Because I need to be nourished,” answered the son. “So it is with God’s Word, son. You can never finish it because it continues to nourish you day by day.” (Vines, 63). Are you going to the Word, where God has given divine revelation & inspiration for your own illumination? Maybe you aren’t illuminated because you don’t have the Spirit of God in your life, which comes through surrendering your life to Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God. Look to the wisdom of God, because when you look to His wisdom, you find yourself looking at & longing for Christ.