1 Corinthians Chapter 2 Verses 1 – 2

* What ***else*** is there? I mean hang every piece of ***good advice***, every price of ***contributive counsel***, every fragment of ***genuine guidance*** out there and then compare it to the benefit or weight of pointing someone to Jesus and **there is no comparison at all!!** Give folks **every bit** of excellence in terms of the wisdom of this world and do not give them Jesus and you have given them *a Dollar Store Heavy Duty AA battery.* Ever buy those? You know, don’t want to take out a second mortgage to get the Energizers? *“Kids, you can have these Duracell’s or you can have college. Which would you like?”* But what happens? Works today but rather quickly over time, ***that power runs out fast!***
* Here is what I have learned. Give the wisdom of the world, know the excellence of situational solutions. Pay attention. Learn from your own experience and from others and have those lessons ready and packaged to share with those in need…but please do not forget that ***the power of deliverance and the power of life is in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*** Colossians 4:5-6 says, *“Walk in Wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.”*
* Corinth was a place of open-air entertainment thought. Folks would gather in the city squares to hear new ideas and doctrines and tales of fortune and adventure as thousands of merchants and travelers passed through week to week. ***Paul had stories to top them all.*** Tales of supernatural scenes that would exhilarate and interest the crowds…but that was not his objective. His desire was not to see them entertained, but to see them come to know the truth. His approach was much more strategic. **Ender’s Game.**
* ***Don’t just defeat the enemy, defeat the enemy’s ability to attack you again.*** He would give them not what would have them needing to come back to him for more, to be entertained again, but Paul would give them what would have them ***stumped and searching*** when no one was around…and maybe, hopefully…one of them would be filled with the Holy Spirit!
* He had just come from Athens on his way to Corinth. You can read the sermon he gave in the midst of the Areopagus (Mars Hill) in Acts Chapter 17 where he gave a wondrous speech about the *“Unknown God,”* never mentioning the name of Jesus…it’s evident that Paul purposed to **never** do that again.
* Summary, give the **testimony of God**, determining and being mindful to put the emphasis on, *filtering through*, Jesus Christ and Him crucified. You’re not selling anything, you’re not trying to prove you’re right and they’re wrong, you’re simply a living declaration…and I love that because the pressure is off!

1 Corinthians Chapter 2 Verse 3

* He was ***beaten and thrown*** in jail in Philippi so he went to Thessalonica where he ***started a riot.*** So he went to Berea where he ***started another uproar*** so he headed to Athens where he was ***mocked*** and then on to Corinth. But none of that is what caused him to tremble. In Acts 20:23-24 we read*, “The Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race…”* He trembled because of the importance of the cure he carried. Look at verse 4.

1 Corinthians Chapter 2 Verses 4 – 5

* I love this! Chuck Smith used to say that i*f you catch them by carnal means you will have to keep them by carnal means.* If Paul captivated the crowds with his persuasive words of wisdom, then they’d exalt him, come back to him for more. He’s not saying that he is against using persuasion and wisdom, recall his sermon before Agrippa in Acts 26, but rather that the Gospel **must** remain the message, and the draw must be the ***demonstration of the spirit and of power***, ***lest we fall in the trap of making addicts instead of Christians.***
* Guzik said it this way. *It is the preacher’s job to preach and it is the Holy Spirit’s job to demonstrate and to deliver the power.* Not against wisdom, not against persuasion…but **against those things being the desire and anxiety of the preacher.**

1 Corinthians Chapter 2 Verses 6 – 8

* Two ways to look at that and they are both ***spectacular!*** First, in terms of the rulers of this age being the chief Jews and Pontius Pilate. If they had of known Jesus, who He was, what He had come to do, they, especially Pontius Pilate would have **never** refused Him! And so as Jesus was on the cross, He cries out to the Father, *“Father forgive them, they don’t know what they’re doing!”*
* But second, the *“rulers of this age,”* who are they today? Please don’t say ***Thumpy and Pudding!*** HA! 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, *“If our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose mind the god of this age has blinded…”* Matthew 4:8-9, *“The devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.”*” How could he offer what was not his? **He couldn’t.** And so I submit to you that perhaps Paul is talking about not flesh and blood but about *principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age* as spoken of in Ephesians 6:12.
* If Satan had known that he would have been dealt the ***ultimate and final defeat*** by the cross of Christ, he would **never** have allowed it to happen! But ***Jesus submitted to the law, and in that submission, being without sin, fulfilled it for all men.*** The veil in the temple tore…the earth quaked and even until today, the tomb representing all men…the one that held our Champion, ***lies empty.***
* Interesting, ever since then Satan hasn’t given up…thus we have seen and still see today a spirit of hate and a desire for total destruction of all Jews. Why? So that perhaps he can stop the second coming…but it won’t happen. ***God has much more in store for this world and for you in particular.***

1 Corinthians Chapter 2 Verse 9

* We quote this and think about this like it goes along with the chorus of the world that, *“God works in mysterious ways…”* Sure He does, **to the one who doesn’t know Him!** ALWAYS consider verse 10 along with verse 9!

1 Corinthians Chapter 2 Verse 10

* Look at that! No, our *carnal eyes* and *fleshly ears* and *darkened hearts* cannot understand the *width and length and depth and height of God’s love* and what He has for each of us! It can’t be studied enough to be understood. It can’t be figured out. But it most certainly CAN be revealed and **is** revealed to those who walk by faith in the Spirit. Look at Ephesians Chapter 3:17-19! ***Yes, even the deep things of God!*** How? ***Not by what you know, but by WHO you know!!***

1 Corinthians Chapter 2 Verses 11 – 15

* How do you learn the things of God and grow in eternal maturity and depth of true power of character? **Be led by the Spirit!** 1 John 2:20, *“You having the anointing from the Holy One…are able to know all things that ought to be known!”* John 14:26, *“The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”*
* God does indeed want us to ***know of Him, know His way, know His plans, know His heart…know Him through and through*** and so He has given us His Holy Spirit that we might freely know the things of God. Our pride, our flesh, our lust has a **blinding affect** on us to the deepest of our core…and so even you, even I have a play in this plan…a responsibility to humble ourselves so that we may be able to receive from the Spirit of truth for *God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.*

1 Corinthians Chapter 2 Verse 16

* ***The mind of Christ.*** What is it? **The mind of the Lion.** The mind of the Alpha and the Omega. The One who is above all of the circumstance and conditions of this life. The One who has overcome the world and the grave. And yet, **the mind of the Lamb.** The mind that is willing to step down and embrace humility for the sake of glorifying the Father and putting others first. That’s **hero** stuff by the way.
* I want to share with you as we close a revelation of the mind of Christ that I learned when I was in Israel. The Mount of Olives overlooks the Old City of Jerusalem. On that mountain is the Garden of Gethsemane. You’d never know this unless you’ve stood there and seen it for yourself… So it goes, the Mount of Olives, then the terrain dips into the Kidron Valley, then up to the Temple Mount. And that is eastward facing. So what is right there? The East Gate to the Temple Mount. It’s also called the Golden Gate or the Beautiful Gate. In Hebrew it’s translated the *“Gate of Mercy.”*
* According to Ezekiel 43:1-5, the presence of the Lord will return through that gate to the rebuilt temple during the Millennial Reign of Christ. Suleiman the Magnificent, after hearing that the God of the Jews was to return through it, sealed it in 1540 AD. But little did he know, he was fulfilling prophecy. Ezekiel 44:1-2 prophecies that the gate must be sealed. And so, as Jesus under the immense pressure and weight of the sins of the world resolved to go through the cross, He would lift His eyes, **see the East Gate, The Gate of Mercy** and remember, *“I’m going through this, so that I will also go through that!”*
* The mind of Christ is to accept even the burden of today in humility, mindful of eternal purpose, mind-filled with the desire to glorify the Father, and mind pre-determined to serve something other than self. This is the mind of the hero. The mind of our, mankind’s original/perfect design…and it is only accessibly through revelation from simply being filled with the Spirit of God and walking with God.