

The Spirit of the Family

8/14/2016

Last week- A family of misfits,

so that "he who boasts, boasts in the Lord."

Being a family of misfits kind of takes the heat off, doesn't it?

1. We don't have to be perfect, only forgiven and faithful.

2. But we can't judge and condemn either,

because neither are WE perfect.

3. I guess we'll just have to

love and put up with each other, huh?

Sounds almost Biblical.

So what comes next?

Even though we are NOT

operating by or appealing to worldly wisdom,

We DO have something working in our favor-

I Corinthians 2:4

⁴ My message and my preaching

were not with wise and persuasive words,

but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power,

⁵ so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom,

but on God's power.

⁶ We do, however,

speak a message of wisdom among the mature,

but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age,

who are coming to nothing.

1. All the Caesars will come to nothing.

2. By this point in time, Pontus Pilate has come to nothing.

3. Herod is either gone, or soon will be.

The only way we know about any of these people,
 the only reason they are even names we know,
 is because of Jesus.

Their wisdom,
 their supposed power and authority, long since gone.
 No more Rome, Herod's lavish palaces... ruins.

The same for Charlemagne, Attila, Genghis Khan,
 Hitler, Stalin... the list goes on and on.

Empire builders, philosophers, economists.
 They had their "15 minutes of fame," to quote Andy Warhol.

But then time marches on,
 and all their accomplishments are now
 footnotes and rubble.

But Paul says we have something different going on-

⁷ No, we speak of God's secret wisdom,
 a wisdom that has been hidden and that
 God destined for our glory before time began.

Think of the implications of that statement for a moment-

"Before time began"-

1. before the Big Bang,
2. before the infinitesimal moment
 before energy transformed into matter
 and the universe began expanding,
 and what WE call "time" began...
God's wisdom that was destined for OUR glory
 was conceived in the mind and heart of God.

HIS wisdom... for OUR glory.

Usually we talk of things for HIS glory,
but that's NOT what THIS verse says.

HE wants the absolute BEST for us... always has.

1. Did Rome always want that for its citizens? Did Caesar?
2. Did Nazi Germany, or Stalinist Russia?
3. Did any of our politicians in recent or modern history?

No, but God DID, for us...in...His...wisdom.

What about that wisdom?

⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood it, for
if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

⁹ However, as it is written:

“No eye has seen, no ear has heard,
no mind has conceived

what God has prepared for those who love him”—

¹⁰ but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.

1. There are things you know by studying nature.
2. There are things you learn by studying
individuals, groups and nations.
3. Sometimes you just make mental breakthroughs,
but those are exceedingly rare.

But the BEST things you learn
by revelation from the Spirit of God.

V. 10 continues-

The Spirit searches all things,
even the deep things of God.

¹¹ For who among men knows the thoughts of a man
except the man's spirit within him?

In the same way, no one knows the thoughts of God
except the Spirit of God.

Nancy and I have been married over 36 years.

We think we know each other pretty well.

1. We can anticipate what the other is going say,
2. We can finish each other's sentences
with a fair level of accuracy,
3. We know when to back off, give each other space.

But sometimes we still misfire, we assume we know,
but you should never, ever assume, right?

In my deepest "heart of hearts," and hers, too,
there are still mysteries,
and unexpected responses and reactions.

There are still secrets to discover,
which is what makes relationships so worth it,
never boring.

HOW MUCH MORE, the heart and mind of infinite God.

Who knows the depths and secrets
of the heart and mind of God?
Only the Spirit, the deepest part of God's nature.

But big news flash- Guess what?

¹² We have not received the spirit of the world
but the Spirit who is from God,
that we may understand what God has freely given us.

¹³ This is what we speak,
not in words taught us by human wisdom
but in words taught by the Spirit,
expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

We have access to AMAZING THINGS.

Some of these truths we are so familiar to us
that we go “ho hum” at them... boorrring... REALLY?

But YOU unfold God’s working through human history
and you have to say... “Boring? Really?”

Paul is the one who, through inspiration,
revealed these truths to us, and they are beyond amazing.

And what we need to realize,
is that these truths are only
the frost on the ice of the tip of the iceberg,
of all the glorious things God has in store
for those who love him.

Wait until we get to chapter 15,
and this is written to the most dysfunctional church
in the New Testament!

So why don’t folks in the world “get it,”
according to Paul?

¹⁴ The man without the Spirit
does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God,
for they are foolishness to him,
and he cannot understand them,
because they are spiritually discerned.

Some things you only “get”
when the Spirit of God is living in you,
motivating you, guiding your decision-making.

Last week,
Tom Workman talked about the very painful process of
donating bone marrow for somebody he’s never even met.
That person could be nice, nasty, a scoundrel, ungrateful.
But Tom, through the Spirit,
knew it was the right thing to do.

Like I said last week,
 spiritual things are craziness to people in the world,
 and it is a foolishness to them.

Why? Because they are "spiritually discerned."
 Because you have to look at things
 from the point of view of God's Spirit.

And then Paul makes another confusing statement-

¹⁵ The spiritual man makes judgments about all things,
 but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment:
¹⁶ "For who has known the mind of the Lord
 that he may instruct him?"
 But we have the mind of Christ.

How do we learn to make proper judgments?

I mean,
 there are lots of people claiming the name of Christ
 that are doing what I would call
 some pretty ungodly things.

What constitutes a "spiritual man," or person?

Jesus says, "By their fruits you will know them."

Matt. 7:16-20

¹⁶ By their fruit you will recognize them.
 Do people pick grapes from thornbushes,
 or figs from thistles?
¹⁷ Likewise every good tree bears good fruit,
 but a bad tree bears bad fruit.
¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit,
 and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.
¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit
 is cut down and thrown into the fire.
²⁰ Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

1. Is the evidence from a person's life consistent with the teachings and example of Christ?
2. When Paul says,
 "Let this attitude be in you,
 that was also in Christ Jesus" from Phil. 2:5,
 does the person reflect that attitude of humility, or not?
3. Does a person reflect the fruit of the Spirit-
 love, joy peace, patience kindness, goodness,
 faithfulness, gentleness, self-control-
 or does their life reflect the acts of the flesh?
(Gal. 5:19-23)
4. Does their life imitate the example of Jesus,
 in terms of how they treat others-
 whether women, little children,
 people caught in sin, foreigners?

By their fruit,
 the evidence of their way of life, you will know them.

¹⁵ The spiritual man makes judgments about all things,
 but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment:

¹⁶ "For who has known the mind of the Lord
 that he may instruct him?"
 But we have the mind of Christ.

And having "the mind of Christ"
 means we will reflect the values of Christ,
 and the way of life of Christ,
 and the way Christ would treat people.

I do believe that THAT is consistent
 with how Paul would define the "spiritual person."

And THAT person will have insight in to the heart of God,

insight that will make absolutely no sense

to a worldly person-

- a worldly person will admire it,

but feel no need to emulate it-

1. Francis of Assisi

2. Mother Teresa

3. Kent Brand, the doctor who contracted Ebola last year.

Whereas a spiritual person will seek to grow

in every way possible into the heart,

the example and the lifestyle of Christ...

like the people I just listed above.

Not perfect, definitely saved by grace, through faith,

but with a burning desire to be like Christ,

and to please the Father, just like Jesus did.

Like truth, wisdom is out there.

Godly wisdom can be ascertained and embraced,

by people possessing the Spirit, and living by the Spirit.

This morning- are you one of them?

1. Does your life reflect, in increasing measure,

the fruit of the Spirit?

2. Are you growing in the attitude of humility

that Jesus demonstrated by coming to earth,

taking the very nature of a servant, and

submitting obediently to death on a cross?

3. Are you immersing yourself in the Word of God,
so that through the Word of God,
you are learning the heart of God?
4. And, once having heard the Words of Christ,
like the wise man who built his house upon the rock,
having heard,
are you putting those words in to practice?
5. Are you looking at things
through the wisdom of the world,
or through the wisdom that comes
from the Spirit of God?

To a crazy, mixed-up, misfit group of believers in Corinth,
obsessed with spiritual wisdom and knowledge,
Paul says they have access to true spiritual wisdom,
to the mature wisdom that comes from the Spirit of God.

We have access to it, too.

It just depends on who you want to listen to.

Spiritual wisdom... do you get it?