

Robert gives the devotion on “Spiritual Wisdom” from 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 and 12-16

- These verses before exposition are themselves:
 - Counter-intuitive: contrary to how the natural man thinks and acts
 - Reforming-focus on the gospel
 - Transforming-lift us to a new mind set
- What was Corinth like in Paul’s time?
 - Most important city in Greece: cross road between the Adriatic and Aegean seas
 - Bustling hub of worldwide commerce
 - A lot of travelers & new immigrants: Priscilla & Aquilla left from Rome for Corinth (Acts 18:1)
- Paul found a church called out of a pagan society:
 - Degraded culture
 - Idolatrous religion
 - Religious stronghold to silence Paul’s preaching (Acts 18:17)
 - Political leaders blind to the injustice (Acts 18:17b)
 - “2:3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.” Acts 4:10-13
- The Corinthians Church was corrupted with host of problems:
 - Factions
 - Lawsuits
 - Immorality
 - Questionable practices
 - Abuse of the Lord’s supper & spiritual gifts
- How would a natural man operate in such corrupted environment? This is path of least resistance
 - Accepts the status quo – don’t rock the boat,
 - Since this can’t be changed, we join the club – adopts their practices as norm
 - Political, religious & commercial alignments & tolerance
 - Tool set of 1st choice:
 1. excellence of speech & persuasive words (2:1 & 4)
 2. words of human wisdom-what man’s wisdom teach (2:4)
 3. wisdom of this age (prevailing thoughts & practices), or rulers (pursuit of high knowledge) (verses 2:6,13)
 4. Under the influence & dominion of “spirit of the world” verse 2:12
 5. Result: Our Faith is grounded on wisdom of men (2:5)
- A superior tool:
 - Verse 2:2 “For I determined not to know anything among you...” – This is counter-intuitive, even suicidal.
 - Of course, Paul knows many things; include tricks and games people play.
 - “Except Jesus Christ and Him crucified” Even more amazing is what Paul would bank his life on:
 1. a message foolish to men (v1:18)
 2. wisdom of God in a mystery, hidden before the ages
 3. the world through own wisdom did not know God (verse 1:21) – showing inferiority of man’s wisdom
 - So we must focus on our core task – preach the gospel
- Transforming mind set – the Spirit of God
 - We have received the spirit of God verse 2:12

1. Know the things that have been freely given to us by God v2:12 – spiritual receptivity
 2. Compare spiritual things – accurate interpretation of the scripture
 3. Judge all things – discernment, proper diagnosis, root cause
 4. Instruct all things – teaching, preaching, evangelism
- We have the mind of Christ
 - The natural man does not have a spiritual dimension in their words, thoughts and acts.
- Why we fall back on spirit of man in dealing with men?
 - The person does not know Christ. Only use the natural man's ways to handle life
 - Does not grow in spiritual maturity – not knowing the word of God
 - Learn the Word, but not practice – not put in action
 - Young in faith, but not humble, insist on own understanding
 - Creature of habits – prior success & old habits carried forward
 - Under pressure of society to conform, being accepted to the group.
 - Do not spend enough time in the Word & prayer
 - Personal pride
 - For convenience & expediency
 - Window of Opportunity
 - Lack of faith in God
 - Worries of this world