

First Corinthians 2: THE TRUE FOUNDATION OF FAITH  
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1 Corinthians 2: THE TRUE FOUNDATION OF FAITH  
PART 1: THE FOUNDATION CANNOT BE HUMAN NOR TEMPORAL v.1-5.

#1. Biblical faith does not and cannot be dependent upon the human arts of persuasion. "And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God" v.1.

#2. The apostle's presentation was no theatrical, political, philosophical nor rhetorical contrivance. He refers to it as "the testimony of God". His was not a performance, rather, *it was the reportage of a supernatural category of thought and meaning.*

#3. The testimony of God, as a category of language, preceded the apostle and transcended his capabilities. "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling" v.3.

#4. This necessarily means that there are 3 gradations of mind with which we must be concerned. There is one's own mind, and there is the mind of another, and then there is the mind of God, who testifies to the world.

#5. The extraordinary thing is that these 3 can share a common relation: "and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom (human), but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" v4.

#6. Paul was claiming that his preaching represented *a supernatural context*. Therefore, it is an *absolute context* that exceeds and overrules the human mind and the temporal world of men. It was presented in just this way. It must always be preached in just that way.

#7. ". . .so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God" v.5. The true foundation of faith is the power of God. Human wisdom is not equipped to underpin true faith. What men think about the gospel and how they think about it has misled many, because that was allowed to serve as the foundation of belief. The power of God is a category of reality external to man and to time.

From 1 Corinthians: THE TRUE FOUNDATION FOR FAITH  
PART 2: THE MYSTERY OF IT ALL v.6, 7.

#1. True faith rests upon the power of God. And that excludes a foundation of human rationalization. Not to disparage right doctrine, but true faith does not rest upon a doctrinal base. The power of God is the deep foundation by which we confront the world of personal experience. True faith goes beyond rationalism.

#2. "Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away" v.6.

#3. Revealed wisdom can produce maturity; a kind of maturity not of this world. It results in a way of acting in time.

#4. It is God's wisdom delivered as a "mystery". Eternal in origin, the mystery precedes man, time, situation and circumstance. ". . .but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory" v.7.

#5. A mystery is not immediately accessible. One has to figure it out. *This is meaning beyond human experience and human rationalism.*

#6. It is "hidden"; to have it you must want it. The question is: What is one looking for?

#7. This hidden wisdom is *the ultimate reference point for temporal, material existence*. This was predestined as the Lord's way of talking to man, before man ever existed. Premeditated.

#8. The immature only search for the obvious. Treating the Word of God as a mystery forces one to lay aside habits of thought that cannot cope with scripture.

#9. So, one asks himself/herself: "Have I entered the mystery, the search for the hidden wisdom"?

From 1 Corinthians 2: THE TRUE FOUNDATION FOR FAITH  
PART 3: THE MYSTERY OF IT ALL. THE WARNING. v.6, 7.

#1. The apostle warns all subsequent generations. Only the "hidden" "wisdom", wrapped in a "mystery" will survive.

#2. The wisdom of man will not survive its encounter with the world. A "wisdom...not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away" v.6.

#3. The mystery is not intended to deceive or mislead; its purpose is to challenge, to test. There is a sharp contrast between human wisdom --> and the hidden wisdom of the mystery.

#4. Can life come forth from death? Can victory spring forth out of defeat? Can hope hold its place when no element of advantage remains? Can substance come forth from the ashes? Can eternal life suddenly spring forth out of moral and spiritual decay?

#5. The hidden wisdom says "Yes"! The mystery, pursued and understood says "Yes"! Human wisdom cannot, will not abide by that. Its counsel is to the contrary. But, "...the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory" (v.7) changes all the rules.

#6. The power of God turns absurdity into the gift of unshakeable wisdom. Is there any biblical example of true faith that does not demonstrate the enactment of this truth?

#7. Human wisdom dominates the thought, speech and behavior of the world; too often, of the church. In consequence, one's faith has to be rationalized away from dependence upon the power of God. Faith should be more "reasonable" than its biblical predecessors.

#8. Think of what we are doing; what we are missing. Scripture stands at the threshold of the mind and language directing us to the power of God. Shall we trust in it?

From 1 Corinthians 2: THE TRUE FOUNDATION FOR FAITH  
PART 4: THE GREATEST TREASURE OF ALL v.8-13.

#1. The elites of the world, thought of the gospel as superfluous. "The wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood..." v.8. Acting on human wisdom is a contradiction of the wisdom of God.

#2. The citation of Isaiah 64 in verse 9 puts the case that the Word of God offers apprehension and understanding beyond man. The Word of God is not common-sense-based.

#3. To achieve understanding of the "mystery" is to find the imperishable. The Holy Spirit "searches all things, even the depths of God" v.10. "The thoughts of God" are captured by the Holy Spirit v.11. It must be so that the thoughts of God are the greatest treasure in existence. All of these treasures are known by the Spirit.

#4. This means that there is a distinction and contradiction between the thoughts of God --> and the thoughts of a man. The Holy Spirit enables *a shared state of mind between the thoughts of God and the thoughts of a man in time, situation and circumstance*. Men can share the thoughts of God.

#5. And that potential shared state of mind represents a big change in all things human: reasoning, creativity, language, the arts.

#6. Men in time have a set *horizon of knowledge*. The Holy Spirit has no such horizon v.12.

#7. The Spirit links *eternal thoughts* --> *to selected language* v.13. Revelation is not logically subject to the human rules of literary criticism. The believer adopts a revealed language manifold and with it he fights, challenges, discredits the spirit of the world.

From 1 Corinthians 2: THE TRUE FOUNDATION FOR FAITH  
PART 5: TWO UNIVERSES OF THOUGHT v.14-16.

#1. There are two universes of thought with which we, as believers, must contend. There are the thoughts of God, made known by revelation. These words we must obey. And there are the thoughts of men, limited by the temporal horizon. These we must challenge and resist.

#2. "But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God" v.14. Thus the stage was set for continual, consistent conflict throughout the range of human history. This will never change.

#3. The "natural man" is the term of reference for those who will not accept revealed language. The Word of God is beyond their liking and beyond their comprehension. Spiritual understanding and respect are far removed from the natural man.

#4. The natural man symbolizes a contrarian universe of thought set against the mind of God: "for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised" v.14. Two universes of thoughts, ideas and understanding in a forever state of war.

#5. Arrayed against the world of unbelief is the man of faith, armed with *a universe of thought not of this world*. "But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one" v.15.

#6. Among many things that divide them is *the issue of absurdity*. It is "foolishness" or absurd to trust in causation from an invisible source. Yet those with "the mind of Christ" (v.16) are convinced that "the power of God" turns this-world absurdities into symbols of the true, unseen Lord of all.

#7. Yes, it is absurd to expect the Red Sea to open (Exodus 13, 14). But, obliged by the revealed record of the power of God, the spiritual man thinks "the more "absurd", the better!