

PTB2-23a: The Bible Book of I Corinthians, Skill in Understanding the Bible.

Skill in Understanding: I Corinthians.

As people ignore the Bible and religion today, they tell you either “it is so confusing as there are so many religions and denominations and competing churches”, or they tell you, “it is hard to understand the Bible since there are so many interpretations and interpreters.” That are right! And it will only get harder as we get further into the Falling Away that must come before Jesus, for the number of Bible teachers with itching ears will grow like a fortress around church members to both give them what they want and in order to protect them from sound doctrine; and simultaneously with that will come among churches and denominations an intolerance toward sound doctrine [\[if you doubt this, please read II Timothy 4:3,4\]](#). If you think it is bad now, wait until we are further into the Falling Away, about the time that some Muslim leader in the Middle East becomes obvious as the son of perdition of II Thessalonians, also the third of the kings from the north of Daniel. If you think the last words of II Timothy 4:4 sound bad when most of the kingdom and most of the local churches turn completely away from truth and turn into fables, it is more awesome to consider first the teaching of Jesus that “sin will abound as the love of many waxes cold and second that Daniel forecasted long ago that during that period of the Falling besides Satan being loosed to ride on that vast wave of lawlessness and sin, that as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn [\[Paul in II Thessalonians\]](#) the “power of the Holy people will be completely shattered” (Daniel 12:7)

Sometimes we must wonder if it is still worth it to “preach the word” in season and out of season, since increasing the churches seek Bible teaching according to their own desires, heaping out the ministers who do not concentrate on that and on comforting them that they are the elect of God, while they are heaping in the itching ears teachers that will do those two things, although sometimes subtly. [\[Have you ever seen and heard of so many Bible teachers. On the radio a few months ago, as the pastor of the FBC Dallas bemoaned that nothing spiritually had happened in that church for years, also had the courage to make the statement that “goodness, there is no shortage of Bible.” And unfortunately we can spend a lot of time listening to and reading ABOUT the Bible, rather than getting to the spiritual understanding of the Bible. We are much like the religious leaders of Jesus’ and Paul’s time who even thought they were teachers of Scriptures, yet had not come to understand fundamental Bible doctrines.\]](#) Even Paul

seems to imply in his second letter to the evangelist Timothy that he had better preach as much as he can because the “time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine”; but like at Corinth, during the second missionary journey of Paul, Jesus in a vision at night spoke to Paul after there he experienced “opposition and blasphemy” (Acts 18:6), telling him “I have many people in this city”. It reminds us of how Elijah in the warfare against the King, Jezebel, the majority of the people of Israel, and the prophets of Baal as they sought his life, had to be reassured by God that “I have reserved seven thousand in Israel” who have not bowed to Baal or kissed him. (I Kings 19:18) Surely this was at least 5% of the people of God in Israel who remained faithful, so that surely in Dallas, in the Southwest and the Bible belt, and the nation we have at least 5% in churches and outside of churches who will listen to sound doctrine. Of course, it is significant that the Apostle Paul had not found those faithful’s in either the synagogue or in the home of Crispus nor did Elijah find them anywhere in Israel during his times of discouraging battles; but nonetheless God and Christ Themselves say that they were kingdom members; and today, even if not in the churches, denominations, and those vast meetings elsewhere we do not find people of God, we know they must exist. You know, it seems that increasing the United States, while official Christian and definitely dominated by the American Democratic Faith, has retreated {the opposite of real revival} to be like the times of Jesus and Paul, even like the times of the Old Testament when there were a lot of false prophets and teachers and when the true Prophets of God like Jeremiah and Ezekiel were ignored and opposed. Jesus Himself wept over the most religious city of all time, Jerusalem, and during a time when religion was the law of the nation of Israel based on Scriptures, saying, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her” (Matthew 23:37)

Anyway for the few who will listen, and surely we must still tell the whole counsel of God like Jeremiah though no one listened, the way of skill in understanding is the prime subject of the book of I Corinthians. That skill in understanding the Bible is called spiritual wisdom as contrasted to the wisdom of the world, what we would call the wisdom of the academics--the PhD’s, Th.Ds., colleges, and seminaries; and while I am a strong believer in real scholarship like Emerson advocated in his essay “The American Scholar”, true scholarship is hardly promoted or achieved with the passing out of pieces of paper; and much less is such a highest piece of paper the sign of spiritual wisdom on the Bible as you can readily see by checking the list of such who have signed up for the Jesus Seminar.

8-1. Our Bible Outline of chapter 2 and 3 on I Corinthians.

As you go back over the topical bible outline of chapters 2 and 3, going from the topics of I to XII and from Genesis to Malachi, looking of course for I Corinthians, you will find often such words as “understanding”, “wise”, and “wisdom”. These as

background for our study and in order to justify the gist of I Corinthians as “spiritual wisdom”, we briefly list them below.

While Paul in I Cor 15:45 is emphasizing the difference between the first Adam and Christ the second Adam, also the difference between the natural and the spiritual body, the first man from earth and the second from heaven, he also contrasts the living soul and the living spirit. {While it is not immediately clear from this topical statement in the Bible outline that “Wisdom on the Gospel” is in progress here, it will be clear as we look at the context of I Corinthians itself in this chapter.} {Same on this one except it is part of Paul’s development of “Wisdom on Marriage”. This is also something not likely to be heeded today in churches or outside churches, as we have not yet learned to admit and confess guilt on God’s pattern for marriage without become a rebel against the very will of God on marriage. In other words, it is not the end of the world if you have divorced; but you must admit to God and confess to God that you have committed this sin against His teachings, and then simply go on from there with a fresh slate as believers must do for all the sins in their lives! Denying that the clear Bible teachings are so will not get it, as Jesus reinforced the original concept God had for marriage in Genesis and Paul does it again here in I Corinthians: what you really do is become part of the worldwide rebellion against the will of God! You might even consider that you are a “tare”, placed in a church by Satan. Definitely part of the Falling Away as you rebel against the sound doctrine (alias sound behavior) of Bible marriage, as you desire and seek a pastor who will overlook that rebellion; and you also will find in that rebellion the correlation with a heart waxing cold toward Jesus, the Bible, and God as this sin of rebellion grows with you!}

So serious is this matter of joining with God that the Bible considers when a man has a relationship with a harlot that he becomes one body with her (I Cor 6:16).

Deuteronomy 32:12 and I Corinthians 10:20: (1) The LORD God led Israel and there was not to be any strange gods among them; and (2) The Gentiles sacrifice to demons not to God, and the Christian is to have no part in this worship of demons. {This is actually part of the point of Paul on “Wisdom about the Falling Away” and on sexual immorality, that is with the proper exercise of spiritual wisdom on conscience; and the actual quote of that context is from Exodus 32:6 in I Corinthians 10:5-8.

“But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, ‘The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.’” Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in on day twenty-three thousand fell...” (I Corinthians 10:5-8 and Exodus 32:6)

{Actually the incident of sexual immorality was a Acacia Grove where “the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab” recorded in Numbers 25, and Numbers tells us that “24,000 died” (25:9); but you know how sometimes the numbering is different depending on whether it is only men, or men and women, or men, women and children; but what is the difference is 1,000 out of 24,000. The bottom line is that God killed them through a plague immediately after one of the men took a Midianite woman to his tent in the presence of the whole assembly.}

Job 5:13 and I Corinthians 3:19: God catches the wise in their own craftiness. {And now we have come to the point in the topical outline, to the start of the wisdom literature with Job, Psalms, and etc. where we are getting into the “wise” of this world, their wisdom, and which set a background or starting point for Paul to develop spiritual wisdom and understanding. Remember that during the second missionary journey Paul had an extensive ministry among the Greeks, a dominant aspect of their culture being a seeking after wisdom, at Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth; and at Athens, just before Corinth he preached “in the midst of the Areopagus” (Acts 17:23) noting how “very religious” they were, and even showed some of their cultural wisdom by quoting from one of their poets, “For we are also His offspring” (Acts 17:28).}

I Corinthians 15:27. Granted that there are many stories, many chapters, verses, and books in the Bible; but the total subject matter for the practical purposes of Christian faith can be summarized as faith in God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and Salvation. Get that and you have enough of the Bible for life. The following important passage helps to establish the present and eternal relationship between God the Father and Christ the Son.

“The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things re put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” (I Corinthians 15:26-28 KJV)

(1). There are still some enemies such as death that has not be subjected to Christ as the Son of Man, or Christ as the Lord of heaven and earth.

(2). God the Father has ordained that all in heaven and earth be under the feet of Christ, and heaven is already there. May Gods will be done on earth as it is in heaven as more people still on earth are subjected to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. (3). God

the Father did not put Himself in subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ. (4). After the Second Coming of Christ when everything on earth also comes under the actual Lordship of Jesus then Jesus will Himself be subjected to the LORDSHIP of the Father.

(5). God the Father may ultimately be all in all .

{While you do not find wise, wisdom, or understanding here, you do find death and eschatology; and it is part of the passage on “Wisdom about the Gospel”, the end of the Gospel including glorification, or the resurrection body; and you just can find as little on the Bible on the latest of last things than this important passage where Christ delivers the subdued kingdom to God the Father in order that the Father may be all in all.} This is also an important doctrine that we sometimes overlook! And in keeping also with the message of I Corinthians 15:26-28 above, we think of the complete dominion by man over earth by overcoming death and sin of Hebrews, likewise the benefits of the Christian calling of Romans 8 previously discussed. By the way, the passage is also another good example of the kingdom without the use of the word kingdom.

5. Who Then Will See God and Be Saved? Those who are sensitive to the Conscience of others as well as his own Christian Conscience, seeking their good as well as his own good: Psalm 24:1 and I Corinthians 10:26. {How important it is today to consider this in the light of the American Conscience, which has become more guided by accusing others and excusing self like the non-Christian Gentiles conscience, and as much governed by the “toleration” of the American Democratic Faith as by any spiritual wisdom, so that we will outline this portion of I Corinthians, as also dictated and demanded by the context, as “Wisdom on Conscience” .}

{Note: as we continued to scan coming to VI on the “Wisdom of God” where in the topical and historical sequenced outline get to what is normally considered as the wisdom literature of the Bible such as Proverbs, Ecclesiastes--among the writings of the King of Israel most noted throughout the world of that day as a man of wisdom, we do not at first find any quotes from I Corinthians, none at all from Proverbs which is also a shock {are we to think that Proverbs simply covers good wisdom of the world rather than spiritual wisdom, although we do find that James revels in quoting from Proverbs as well as Peter and John, and perhaps as you noticed on “Wisdom from God” in Proverbs, Paul does quote from Proverbs in I Timothy. Is this a clue for us as to some similarity between I Timothy and I Corinthians?}.

8-2: Those Given the Grace of Understanding.

It should be obvious with the weirdos on TV with teachings supplemental to the Bible, from the many supposedly Bible based books on the best seller list, with all these strange sounding “revelations God gave me” to quote some of them, and with all these new advances in the Gospel of Prosperity, if you would believe some of the many Bible teachers with itching ears...I say with all this massive “heaping up” of Bible teachers like a monumental fortress, the size and length of the famous wall of China, to protect the desires of church members and the intolerance toward sound doctrine mentioned in II Timothy 4:3,4, it is important that we fall back to what we really know to be the Word

of God, some of which is to be found in I Corinthians where we know it to be from the Apostle Paul, we know Paul to be an Apostle who with the Prophets and Jesus have ever been the only ones authorized to give Revelations through men; and further in the first 9 verses of I Corinthians 1, we see exactly who are the blessed recipients of understanding: it is those who have already received “the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus” (I Cor 1:4) for “all utterance and all knowledge” (1:5).

1. And don't you ever believe that there are no restrictions on the utterances and the knowledge of that grace of understanding. First of all, it is a gift from God through the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore is not to be peddled like some commercial product. You know as you listen to all these potentially false teachers and preachers on television, and even in your churches and denominations--and remember you who really look for the Second Coming must also face up to the realities of false prophets, teachers, and preachers in the end times--those teachers who claim even by their presence behind the pulpits that they have a special gift of understanding, beyond just the gift of gab, emotion, and salesmanship, that if it is really a gift from God they will find it hard to peddle it beyond the extent of daily bread.

(1). There were only 12 Apostles, all personally taught by Jesus, and Paul was one of them. We know the first 12 that Jesus called to be Apostles and trained, and how the 12 went down to 11 as Judas fell by transgression, and then how 520 disciples under the leadership of Peter decided that God through Jesus had chosen Matthias to be numbered with the 12 (Acts 1:21-26), but what the Ascended Christ really needed was a converted and practical Bible scholar {a lawyer, already schooled in Scriptures} to properly interpret all the Old Testament Scriptures, and to write 14 books of the New Testament, also sponsor 3 more through John Mark and Dr. Luke. {Don't ever forget that the Apostle Peter testified to the Apostle Paul as writing scriptures in II Peter 3:15,16.}

(2). Don't forget also that only the Ascended Christ chooses Apostles and Prophets. Peter also said that it was the Spirit of Christ speaking through the Prophets of the Old Testament which gave us OT Scriptures, and in Ephesians 4:7-11 that we also learn that it was the Ascended Christ who gave the gifts of understanding and Revelation to the Prophets and Apostles.

“And He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers...” (Ephesians 4:11)

There will be no more Apostles and Prophets today with the gift of revelation, so immediately although reluctantly you can label as “false” using righteous judgement any today who claim the gift from Christ of an Apostle or Prophet. While it is true that in New Testament days there were prophets and prophetesses in the sense of the

democratic nature of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the last days and as recorded in Acts 2:22-39, their gift was not as mediums of revelation but after were gifts of wisdom, as for example those who warned Paul of the bondage fate that awaited him in Rome. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WISDOM AND REVELATION! There is a difference between Revelation, which is the giving of the Word of God through Apostles and Prophets, and illumination, which is the gift of understanding of those originally given Revelations. The great similarity between Revelation and Illumination is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit of God is the source of giving revelations through "holy men of God" especially chosen to be Apostles and Prophets--all in the past, and forget anyone that claims to be the equivalent today; and God the Holy Spirit is the source of giving illuminations of the revelations today.

{When the Apostle Paul as directed by the Spirit and the Ascended Christ, the overall direction, of course, coming from God the Father, to write the epistle of I Corinthians, it was to make clear that distinction between revelation and illumination, between understanding and wisdom, between the gifts to all church members, and the how of how those gifts come! We have read it, and at some point in our Christian heritage, we have known it; but we have either forgotten, ignored it, or chosen it as part of what we will no longer endure of sound doctrine.}

(3). Another righteous judgment criterion you can use to distinguish between false Bible teachers, itching ears Bible teachers, false and true spirits is to see if their so-called gift of understanding from Jesus and the Holy Spirit, their claimed understanding for utterance and knowledge, achieves the purposes the Ascended Jesus intended when He gave to men the gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers. {The three gifts, unlike apostles and prophets, which do exist today.} That is also given in the context of Ephesians 4:7-16, and for certain you can know even before you read it again that it was not given to make them famous, or rich, or even for their profit but rather for the total body of the church, nothing less than the assembly of the Firstborn, the Lord Jesus Christ, written in heaven. And I like what Paul calls it here in I Corinthians 1:2 as "the church of God {not to be confused with the denomination called Church of God which has done much to promote contemporary misunderstandings on revelation and illumination}, that is "the church of God which is at Corinth" which makes it clear that no matter what label men chose for themselves and their group, and they are almost without number, if there is really some people of God in that local church, then it is the "church of God at fifth and main of a certain city", or something similar. {I know all the churches, diverse teachings, and denominations--always growing--is confusing; but remember 2 things: (1) the Lord knows his own; and (2) like at Corinth as Paul was told in the vision of a dream, in any given city there is a remnant of people that God calls His own.} Well, you can look at anyone claimed to be called of God and the Lord Jesus

Christ for a certain ministry to see if they really qualify according to the original purposes of the Ascended Christ for ministry.

“...for {the gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers--the only three gifts of ministry available today that are given by the Ascended Christ} the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry {1}, for the edifying of the body of the body of Christ {2}, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ {3}, that we should no longer be children, tossed to and from and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting {4}, but, speaking the truth in love {5}, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--{6}, Christ--from whom the whole body {you just must see this to be nothing less than the total body of Christ no matter where the church of God at so and so is located and what it is called, if indeed it has some of the people of God in it}, joined and knit together {today with even separations and competitions between churches of the same denomination, we just can not see that “joining” of all churches and denominations; and especially we can not see the “knit together”} by what every {7} joint supplies {if this were really true today then we could say that the joint at First Baptist Church at seventh and main supplies a part share to the Roman Catholic Church on Preston Road, but we all know that it is not working that way, and in this message from I Corinthians we must discuss that}, according o the effective working by which every part {8} does its share {do you think that some churches of some denominations are not doing their share of work and ministry for Christ?}, causes growth of the body {9} for the edifying of itself in love.” (Ephesians 4:1216)

Immediately, and before we get into the 9 ways you can recognize a gift of utterance and knowledge as being from the Ascended Christ, is the general statement that if the utterance or special knowledge builds up the speaker or the speaker’s prosperity instead of the total body of Christ, then the edification is of the so-called Bible teacher himself or herself rather than of the total body of Christ. {Since II Corinthians has the message of “The Ministry”, we will have to be patient through the next chapter on II Corinthians before we can properly deal with all 9 of these proofs of utterances and knowledge from Jesus.}

2. The gift of utterance and knowledge is given only to those members of the local church who can meet the standards of I Corinthians 1:1-9: (1) you must honestly be able to say that you are a member of the “church of God” at such and such a location with reference to the fact that this is the total body of Christ, written in heaven, it in no way being sufficient to stake a claim based on a local church or denomination; (2) you must be among “those who are sanctified” in Christ Jesus, this sanctification being the God part of our salvation after we believe, the “believe and be baptized” of the great

commission of Jesus, and which is the constant theme of this volume on the letters of the Apostle Paul, that sanctification most often known as the One Baptism, or the total work that God does inside us; (3) you must be called to be saint, and while you are at the stage in your believer's life that you feel strange about that word, you must recognize the sense that you are called to become that, that is a saint--yes with all the holiness and righteousness of a saint in the Scriptural sense of the word, not to be confused with the teachings of certain men about sainthood; (4) you must recognize your place in the larger group of "all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord--He is their Lord and our Lord, and to act in any way differently, or superiority, or the elect of the elect, is to contradict your place in that larger group, that is in the Assembly of the Firstborn, written in heaven; (5) the grace of God was given to you; (6) at the giving of that grace of God, you were "enriched in everything" [{this is spiritual gifts which are far more important than material gifts which are never to be sought with priority, but here as always the practitioners of the Gospel of Wealth, of Success, and Prosperity will take it and run with it}](#), the everything here quickly focusing on "by {Christ} in all utterance and all knowledge"--you want to speak spiritual utterances and you want to show spiritual knowledge, well the source must be Jesus Christ, the grace to do that must not come first from the local TV station, but also from as a grace of God whereby you were "enriched" in everything; (7) the testimony of Jesus Christ must be confirmed in you even as the Apostle Paul confirmed in the church of God at Corinth that it was in some of them; (8) your group is short of no gift in utterance and knowledge that Paul is about to discuss in I Corinthians; (9) you are "eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, obviously the Second Coming, and that the emphasis of your life shows that eager waiting--you can wait that long to be prosperous to the extent that you need to be prosperous, always seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; (10) year by year you should sense the confirmation of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself in your life if nothing but the silent hearing of "Abba" for Our Father in heaven; (11) you should also be seeing progress toward being "blameless" in your life, an increasing holiness and righteousness as you grow in the words of Ephesians toward the full stature of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; (12) you should realize that God is faithful, not only will He not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able, but He will provide for you wisdom in the words of the Apostle James, when you ask in faith--catchy huh, faith in the faithfulness of God; and (13) you should have the understanding to comprehend that you are called into nothing less than "the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord".