

## 1 Corinthians Class 4 Transcript

Greetings, and welcome back to FI Online. Today we're going to be covering lesson number 4 of the series on **1 Corinthians**. Now, last time we were able to finish up through **chapter 2** and **verse 7**, and we'll pick up in **verse 8** today. But again, as always, we want to ask God's blessing on our classes. So, if you will, once again, please bow your heads. We will ask God's blessing on today's class.

[Prayer]

As we said, we will continue on where we were last time. We read through **verse 7**. Now in the first part of **chapter 2**, the apostle Paul—well, let's just back up, even to, I think, a little earlier. At the end of **chapter 1** Paul is making the point that none of us have anything to be proud about, to glory in, but instead that there is a glory in the fact that God in His mercy has chosen to call us now. That's a wonderful thing, but that's a glory that all of us share.

He goes on to talk about how he brought the message to the people in Corinth. And he says, "I didn't bring something that's a great impressive message. I didn't come as an eloquent orator that people could listen to, spellbound, for hours. I came with a very simple message that had to do with the gospel—that Jesus is the Messiah, that He has come, that He died on our behalf, that He is raised from the dead, and that He will be coming again to establish His kingdom here on this earth." An exciting message, but a message that in the eyes of the world seemed rather foolish and empty. They didn't understand it. They didn't believe it. It made no sense to them. But as he says, "to those who are called, it is an amazing message, an inspiring and moving message."

[2:53]

He talks there, as we moved into **chapter 2**, about the wisdom of God as opposed to the wisdom of man. And we read the passage in **James chapter 3 verses 13** through **17** that points out the difference between worldly wisdom—which is in fact, as he says, literally a demonic wisdom—and the wisdom of God. And we can tell the difference, to a great degree, by what that wisdom produces. Beginning with the spirit of meekness and humility, and then producing all those other wonderful traits that **verse 17** of **James 3** talked about.

Now, he says, that though the world doesn't understand that, in **verse 7** of **1 Corinthians 2**, we read:

[**1 Corinthians 2:7**] *But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery,—*

We talked about a mystery and how that that was something that you couldn't understand until it's revealed, but once it's revealed, it's no longer mysterious to you; it's a truth that's very, very important. But there is the realization that until God reveals it to somebody else, they can't understand it. They are unable to do that.

So God has revealed it to us, and he describes it as:

*—the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, (that He intended it to*

be for that.)

[04:08]

So, let's continue on in **verse 8**:

*which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

They would not have crucified Jesus Christ, who is returned to glory—who lived in glory, and came here, and returned to glory. They would certainly not have done what they did to Him. But they did what they did because they couldn't understand. Their minds were closed at that point.

And Paul goes on to quote from **Isaiah**. He says:

[1 Corinthians 2:] **9** *But as it is written:*

*“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard,  
Nor have entered into the heart of man  
The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*

Now this is a really profound passage for us. Let's read the original. It goes back to **Isaiah 64** in **verse 4**. Isaiah wrote:

[**Isaiah 64:4**] *For since the beginning of the world  
Men have not heard nor perceived by the ear,  
Nor has the eye seen any God besides You,  
Who acts for the one who waits for Him.*

So, Paul has taken that principle, and he said, “This applies not only to the revelation of who God is, but to the plan that God has, what He's doing for mankind.” It has not *entered into the heart of man the things which God prepares for those who love Him*. This is not something that humans can come up with on their own. It is outside the ability of the human eye to see, or the ear to hear.

So, where does that leave science, which demands that everything must be physically measurable? If it isn't, it doesn't exist.

Now, we don't reject science. Science is a wonderful tool. But we do understand that science has its limits. Its limits are the physical universe. Science is limited to that which is physical. But as Christians, we should not be limited to that which is physical.

[6:07]

Now remember, last time we talked about the origins of wisdom and how human beings tend to rely upon themselves, their own learning ability, their own intellectual ability, their own ability to think inside and discover the wisdom from inside, which is such a popular idea today. I think many people don't recognize that those ideas come from the Eastern religions, which are inherently false and wrapped up in false gods and false beliefs of all kinds. So, yet it becomes

very popular in our society to think that, “Oh well, the truth is inside of you. Just follow your heart. You know that you can always trust your heart.” Well, that's not what Scripture says. Scripture says *the heart is deceitful above all things*. So we'd better not be trusting in our human heart apart from God.

But we do have something we can trust in; we're not left in the dark. If we acknowledge, as we read there in **Psalm 111 verse 10**, and **Proverbs 9 verse 10**, that *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*, if we build from that foundation, we're not left in the dark. We're not left with an inability to see or understand. We are able—we're not limited, let's say, in that sense, by the way science is—because science is limited to the physical. We automatically say, “No, we're not limited to that.” We include all of those physical things. The physical things are true. But, there's another dimension. And it's a spirit dimension that God has made available to those that He's called.

He tells us in **Proverbs 20 in verse 12**, and I won't take the time to go through it (I've given a whole sermon on this particular verse.), but it says:

**[Proverbs 20:12]** *The hearing ear and the seeing eye,  
The LORD has made them both.*

He tells us many lessons there. But one of the things he tells us is, the God who gives us the ability to perceive is the God who created those things, and they are absolutely amazing! The senses that we as humans have are absolutely amazing! But that is not God's greatest creation either.

I'd like to turn back to **Matthew chapter 13**, if you would join me there, because this tells us about our ability to see and understand. He's just said that the human ear and the human eye cannot perceive these things. So let's go back to **Matthew chapter 13**. Now you may remember, **Matthew 13** is a chapter that has a number of parables in it. The very first one is a parable about the sower going and sowing seed on different levels of ground.

Now, remember, the disciples were very upset with Jesus because He was teaching the people with a parable, and basically, they were saying: “How do you expect them to understand when you're giving them a parable about seed and sowing, and how are they going to understand that? Why are you speaking to them that way, instead of plainly explaining things the same way that you do with us?” Remember those disciples were called. All those people were not called yet.

[9:12]

So we pick up the story in **verse 13 of Matthew 13**, where it says:

**[Matthew 13:13 NRSV]** *The reason I speak to them in parables is that 'seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.'* **14** *With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says:*

*'You will indeed listen, but never understand,*

*and you will indeed look, but never perceive.*

Now move on to **verse 15**:

*For this people's heart has grown dull,  
and their ears are hard of hearing,  
and they have shut their eyes;  
so that they might not look with their eyes,  
and listen with their ears,  
and understand with their heart and turn—  
and I would heal them.'*

But then he says something that is so profound and important:

**16** *But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. 17 Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.*

This is such a profound statement from Jesus Christ, where He says you and I are able to see what a human eye can't see, hear what a human ear can't hear, not because of anything in us but because our eyes and our ears have been blessed by God. That's such an incredible concept! You understand today because God has blessed your eyes and your ears to be able to comprehend, and mine as well.

[10:46]

Again, get back to the concept of “hear” in the book of **1 Corinthians**—what are we dealing with? We are dealing with a people who are moved by pride—who begin to think that they have a lot of intellectual ability. And Paul is saying, “No. There's one reason, and one reason only why you understand what the rest of mankind doesn't. Your eyes and ears have been blessed.” We must never forget that, because, quite honestly, if we forget that, or we take that for granted, we can lose that blessing, and we can cease to understand. We probably all know people who have been down that road, sadly, who have ceased to understand what they once understood. They've lost it. It's not there anymore.

It points out that the knowledge of God is not simply an intellectual knowledge. It is a matter of the heart as well. The concept of the change of the heart that comes through this knowledge is fundamental. We don't really know the truths of God until we live those truths, until we are changed by those truths. Just knowing them intellectually doesn't do it. We have to become different people.

In **Romans chapter 1** and **verse 21**. I won't—well, yes, I will put that up on the screen. From the *New International Version*, it says this:

**[Romans 1:21]** *For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.*

That's what happens when people fail to acknowledge God, when they fail to respond to the

knowledge that God gives, or when they turn away from obeying God. It is the Spirit of God that enlightens us, and without that Spirit, we don't have the enlightening anymore. It doesn't stay in us forever if we turn away from that source.

So he goes on to say, and he makes this clear in **verse 10**:

**[1 Corinthians 2:] 10** *But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.*

*God has revealed*—the word that's used there is a word that has the sense of “taking away a covering so you can see something that was there all along, and you didn't realize it.” God has revealed these things. He's opened it up, and He's done that through His Spirit. We could draw the metaphor—and it's used in other passages as well—of the Spirit of God being like *a light that shines*; that we were in darkness, and when God gives His Spirit, that light shines, and it reveals what we couldn't see before. It shows us things that we couldn't have understood. And, that Spirit is not just something that comes once, and we see these things, and then we're done. It continues to search. We use the Spirit of God to examine, to search, to try to understand, to try to come to even a deeper understanding of God Himself.

[13:59]

Now, it's interesting here (This is a small point, but I do think it's important to understand.), where it says, *God has revealed them to us through His Spirit*, he's just said, “eye can't see, ear can't hear,” but He has now *revealed them to us through His Spirit*—some of the commentaries, some of the very good commentaries even say that what Paul is telling the people of Corinth is, “Well, you can't see and hear these things, but God's revealed them to us, the apostles, so you can trust in us.”

That's the furthest thing from what Paul is saying. Paul is saying that if you have the Spirit of God in you, you can see and understand what most people can't—what the people who don't have the Spirit of God cannot understand. I think you've had that experience in your life, as I have too. There are things that we can read in Scripture and understand—well, in the first place, that we never understood before. It's like suddenly, “Wow! I didn't know that was there.” But, we also know that there are other people who are very fine people, friends, loved ones, family members, who just can't see and understand what we believe. They may have their own set of beliefs. They may be very fine people in some ways, but they just don't understand. They can't see it. They think there's something wrong with you and me because of what we believe.

Why do we see what they don't? Our eyes have been blessed. Our ears have been blessed. We've received a Spirit that enables us to see and understand, and that Spirit leads us to search further. We want to know more. We're not satisfied with what we know. We want to go deeper. We want to understand more. I would hope that that's the motive that many of you have for watching these classes in the first place. You want to know more. You want to see more. So God uses that Spirit.

[15:53]

[1 Corinthians 2] verse 11, he says:

*For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.*

Now, let me explain how most of the commentaries see this verse, and then we'll come back and probably spend the rest of this program talking about the concepts that are here through the remainder of this chapter because they're so very important.

If you were to look at most of the commentaries, what they would say is, "Okay, there is a spirit of man (which most people think is an immortal soul, which of course the Bible doesn't teach, but that's the assumption). There's this immortal soul, and as human beings we understand certain things, and we're able to understand human things because we all have this same kind of a spirit something going on inside."

But, he says, *no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God*. Well, most religious people think of the Spirit of God as a being. We understand that's not true. That's not what Scripture teaches. But they think it's the third member of a Trinity, and basically their interpretation of this Scripture is, "Well, we can know the things that humans know, but, you know, when it comes to the things of God, the only one that knows is the Holy Spirit. That's all. Nobody else knows."

What a destructive thing that would be! Does that fit at all with what Paul is saying? Paul is saying: "You and I have been given special knowledge that the world doesn't have, that mankind as a whole can't see or understand, because our eyes are blessed, our ears are blessed. He's given us His Spirit, and because of that, we can understand things of God." It's clear that that's what he's talking about.

[17:39]

But what is this *spirit in man* thing? Now, years ago when my family first started attending the Church of God back in the mid-1960s, Mr. Armstrong was just coming to a deeper understanding about this concept of the *spirit in man*. I remember going to our first feast, and Mr. Armstrong spoke about four times, and every time he spoke, he spoke about the *spirit in man*. He was so excited about what he was learning. And it was important. The more you study it, the more you understand it, the more you realize, this is an amazing concept.

What it tells us is that, as human beings, yes, we're physical bodies. There is also—we're not just physical, like stones and rocks, pieces of concrete or dirt, but, there's a living part as well. And, there's also a spirit component that makes us different. Animals have both body and life, but they don't have that spirit component in them. It's not there. It's a special component that's in human beings.

Now when Mr. Armstrong first started teaching about that, there were people who said, "Oh, Mr. Armstrong, you're talking about an immortal soul." He said, "No, I'm not. No, I'm not."

This *spirit in man* is kind of like the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God isn't a person. It isn't a

consciousness. It isn't a being. It's a power that God uses. And the *spirit in man* is, likewise, a power. It doesn't have a separate consciousness. It doesn't know things on its own. It doesn't communicate on its own. It only functions when it's in a human being, a living human being. It functions there. And that spirit is a component that makes up what we are.

Now we probably haven't heard much about that in a long time. I know I've given sermons on it, but—and probably many other pastors have as well—but it's not something, for some reason, we talk about a great deal. But it's a very important concept. It is that spirit component in a human being that makes us like God—separates us from the animal world.

Remember in science we said, as far as science is concerned, human beings are the highest evolved form of the animal kingdom. But Scripture tells us, “No, you're not animals.” We are made in the image of God, not the image of animals. We are made in the image of God. And that includes the marvelous ability to think and to reason.

[20:22]

I'm always fascinated studying about how the mind works, and what takes place. But one of the things that I find today that's very common in much of the research is, most researchers are trying to show how human thought is really nothing more than a series of chemical reactions inside our brains—that that's all that's there. Well, why would they do that? Because, to them it all has to be physical. So there has to be a physical explanation for “thought.” But we understand, “No, there's a spirit component.” You can't measure spirit. You can't put it on a scale. You can't put it in front of a spectrometer and break it down. You can't hear it. But it's very, very real. And the Scripture talks about that.

I would hope that if you haven't spent time studying it, you'll go back to the *Life, Hope and Truth* website and look up some of the articles about the *spirit in man*. There are even sermons, again, that are posted about the *spirit in man* that can be extremely helpful.

But understand a few things about this. Let's go back and notice here in **Job chapter 32** and **verse 8**, Job was inspired to write:

**[Job 32:8]** *But there is a spirit in man,  
And the breath of the Almighty—*

And again, in Hebrew and in Greek, *breath* and *spirit* are the same words. They mean the same thing. In Hebrew: *rûah*; in Greek: *pneuma*. These mean “spirit” or “breath” or “wind.”

So, he says:

*—there is a spirit in man,  
And the breath (or the Spirit) of the Almighty gives him understanding.*

God gives us understanding through His Spirit. But in every human being, even those who don't yet have the Spirit of God in them, there is this *spirit in man*. It is a spirit component that makes it possible for us to have a connection with God, who is Spirit. Animals don't communicate with God. Animals have the most amazing thing built into them called “instinct.” And it is awesome

when you stop and consider what animals with tiny, tiny brains can do because God has built instinct into them. We don't minimize instinct. But as humans, we don't function by instinct. And it's not just a series of chemical reactions in the brain. We are guided by a spirit influence. There is a *spirit in man*.

Now when we talked about this in the past, one of the analogies that Mr. Armstrong often used was a lightbulb, where he said, if you take a lightbulb that's disconnected from any electrical source—you have glass and metal and vacuum, and it's all there—but it doesn't do anything. When you put the power through it, the electrical power, you have light; you have heat. All of this takes place, but it's still the same lightbulb.

[23:18]

In a similar way, where human beings are concerned, we have brain. Animals have brain. We can't see qualitatively a significant difference between humans and animals. If the quantity of brain were the key factor, then whales would be far smarter than human beings. But of course, they're not. There's another factor there. God has built that spirit factor in. He's placed a *spirit in man*, a power that makes “brain” into “mind,” and all that goes into making up the mind. It is your character. It is your memory. It is your personality. It is all of those things that go into making you the person that you are. And, the *spirit in man* does the same thing in me.

But there's something special about that. And that is that, if I am the person I am because of the *spirit in man* in me, and you are the person you are because of the *spirit in man* in you, then the relationship between the two of us is a spiritual relationship. It isn't based upon animals. When scientists study rats in a maze to see how reasoning takes place, you can certainly learn certain lessons there. But, we aren't rats. We aren't animals. There's another component in us, and it's a very important one.

When it comes to that *spirit in man*—just by itself, leaving the Spirit of God out—the *spirit in man* is in every human being. When it comes to that *spirit in man*, it enables human beings to do certain things. First of all, it enables us to know how to manipulate matter. Human beings are able to do all kinds of amazing things. We see marvels of engineering. We see amazing things happening in the world of computers and artificial intelligence, and all of those things taking place. But man has not been able to duplicate human reason, human thought. It's not there.

The *spirit in man* enables us to do those things. But, we don't know how to get along with each other—the relationship between people, in families, in relationships they have with others, and neighbors, friends, relationships between nations. Man has demonstrated for thousands of years, we don't know how to do it. We don't have that ability because of the *spirit in man*.

We also don't know how to relate to God. Look at the confusion that is called “religion” in the world today. All of those people out there have the *spirit in man* just like you and I do, but their understanding of God is chaos. It is confusing. And in many cases, they've just given up and said, I don't even believe there is a God. That's human reason apart from God. But you and I have been given something more. We've been given a Spirit from God, and that's what Paul is talking about here.



[26:25]

Well, let's go on. There's another passage which I think is, to me, one of the most moving and powerful passages when you stop and think about it—and you do have to take some time to stop and think.

I mean, stop and consider this: God took “nothing” and made “matter.” And then He made “matter” live. And then He made matter, not only that lived, but could move around and reproduce itself. And then after all of that—all of the plants and the animals, and all of those things were created—God created a human being in His own image. And that individual can do a lot more than move around. Those individuals that God created have the ability to think, to reason, to choose, to plan. They're cognizant of their own mortality. It is amazing what the human mind really is. We refer to it—sometimes the term is “sentience,” the ability to think. God took nothing, made it matter, and then made matter—gave matter the ability to think. What an amazing thing that is!

Zechariah talks about that in **Zechariah 12 verse 1**. It's one of my favorite verses. He says:

**[Zechariah 12:1]** *The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. —*

Now a “burden” is something to be “lifted up.” So, here's a message from God to be “lifted up” to Israel. And, as we talked about before, God sometimes—just as a human speaker would do—will say: “Here's why you should listen to me. Here are my qualifications. Here's why this message is something you should pay attention to. It's not just a message from your neighbor down the road. This is a message from God.”

*The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel. Thus says the Lord, who stretches out the heavens,—*

When we stop and think about the heavens and what that means—the vastness of this universe, the complexity that we only begin to scratch the surface of—it is awesome! And God says, “You see all that out there? I made that. I made it all.”

And then He says:

*—(who) lays the foundation of the earth, —*

Now when you look at this, the concept here isn't just simply a matter of God saying: “I made the heaven. I made the earth.” The term that's used here for the *earth* is a term that can refer to how everything interconnects, that God made the *earth* where everything works. We have symbiotic relationships between different kinds of living beings. We have everything [that] works. The weather works. The ocean currents work. The day and night work. Everything works perfectly. God put it all together.

And again, the more we understand about the earth and the incredible systems that are involved, the more we are amazed that all this is here, and God says. “Oh, yeah, I made that too.” And then notice the third thing he says:

—and forms the spirit of man within him:

Of the three greatest things God has done, Zechariah's inspired to say: "He made the *heavens*, He made the *earth*, and He made *the spirit in man*." That is an amazing thing—what that spirit does. It ranks as one of the highest, most important things God has done.

[29:43]

Solomon wrote about it in **Ecclesiastes [3:21]** as well. He says:

*Who knows the spirit of the sons of men, which goes upward, and the spirit of the animal, which goes down to the earth?*

Animals don't have the *spirit in man*. They don't have this power that God gives to us, to empower "brain" and make "mind" out of it. The spirit is not an immortal soul. The doctrine of the immortal soul is based upon Satan's lie in the Garden of Eden. It's a corruption of the teaching about the *spirit in man*.

Notice here in **Romans chapter 8, verse 16** in the *New Revised Standard Version*. He says:

**[Romans 8:16]** *It is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.*

He talks about the Holy Spirit, and he says *it bears witness with our spirit*. Those are two separate things. God has placed in every human being the *spirit in man*. But His Spirit unites with that spirit. And again, the metaphors are so powerful when you consider the process of conception, and growing within the womb, and being born. All of those are shown in the plan that God has for each of us, that His Spirit joins with our spirit, and we become something new, just as a child that's conceived is something brand new. They're not a copy of something else. We become something brand new through that *spirit in man* that God places in us.

So, he goes on to say that He has placed that there, and it shows that we are His children by that Spirit uniting with ours. Just as the *spirit in man* gives us human mind, as opposed to just animal brain, the Holy Spirit energizes human mind to the ability to understand spiritual matters. Man—and that includes every one of us—cannot understand spiritual things on our own. But if we're led by God's Spirit, we can have spiritual understanding. We cut ourselves off from that Spirit, and we're left with nothing but the *spirit in man*. And the *spirit in man* can't understand those spiritual things.

Now it doesn't mean that the instant we receive the Spirit of God, we have all spiritual knowledge. But it enters our lives, and it's like a light comes on, and we begin to use that light to examine our world. And by "our world," I don't just mean the physical things, but everything that goes into making up life. We use that Spirit. We begin to analyze on that basis. And we're going to see that as we go further in this chapter, that that's what we're supposed to be.

[32:32]

**[1 Corinthians 2] verse 12** *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world,—*

Okay, there is an influence out there. We are told that there is a *ruler* of the *powers* of this world, that there is a *god of this world*. That's not the spirit we've received.

—*but the Spirit who*—

Or rather as the Greek has it:

—*the Spirit, the one from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.*

This doesn't apply to every human being. It applies to those that God has called. We should recognize that God has given us His Spirit so that we can understand what it is impossible to understand without His Spirit. If we look at this physical world around us, and we think of it in only physical terms, we're making a very, very serious mistake. When we look at the chaos that we see in society today—and there're all kinds of things going on in our own country and in other countries around this world—if we look at that chaos and we think of it only in terms of the physical people involved, then we're missing a very important dimension.

There's a spirit dimension that is affecting this world and causing it to go in the directions it's going. Christians should recognize that. If we get all distracted by politics, by politicians, by who we think should be in office here, or there, whenever, then we're missing the fact that this world is under a spiritual influence, and it's not the Spirit from God; it is the spirit in this world. He's given us the ability to see that. Do we **dare not** see it? Do we **dare not** use His Spirit to recognize the spirit influence in this world and where it's going, and therefore to live in a different way?

[34:28]

**Verse 13** (He says) *These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, —*

Now he doesn't say the word *wisdom* again, but it's there:

— (the wisdom) *which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

Okay. What does this tell us? It tells us that since God has given us this incredible power of His Holy Spirit, that we should use that Spirit continually to examine our lives, to examine the way we're living, to examine the world around us and come to the proper understanding—not just accept the standards of the world.

How do you determine what standards you'll live by? How do you determine what the values are in your life? Are they determined by the world around us? They're not supposed to be. They are supposed to be determined by the Spirit of God leading and guiding us to look with different eyes. It's like the world around us is staggering in darkness. That's the way God describes it. He describes it as "staggering like blind men at noonday—groping for the wall." [Isaiah 59:10]

But you and I are not left in that darkness. We're given the light of God's Spirit, and we need to be using it in every area of our lives. We should be asking ourselves when some opportunity

comes along, “Is this something a Christian ought to be involved with? Is this something where the Spirit of God would lead me to be involved in this?” Sadly, I see so many get all wrapped up in things that are foolish, that are senseless, that have no enduring value whatsoever—entertainment, and so on, that really has no meaning or value. Now entertainment can have a role in our lives. But, for many people today, it seems to be a huge role, instead of it being a small diversion here and there. He said we’re supposed to see these things. We’re not looking at this through man’s wisdom, but what the Holy Spirit teaches.

Now, I love education. Teaching is an important thing to me. There is a great difference between lecturing and teaching. Now, what I’m doing here is lecturing. Am I teaching? Well, that really depends on whether you’re learning or not. If you’re not learning, I’m not teaching; I’m just talking. I’m just making noise. If, on the other hand, you’re learning, then there’s a process taking place between us. There’s a teaching and a learning that takes place. We’re told that the Holy Spirit teaches. That means that you and I, with that Spirit, must be students. We must be learning. We must be using that Spirit in that way.

[37:09]

And then he talks about *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*. In other words, you and I, when we evaluate things, are evaluating on a different basis than the world around us does. We have a different set of values. We don’t judge as the world judges.

I think of an example years ago. I remember a gentleman—he’s no longer alive—but he was a very fine Church member, and I considered him a friend. He was working in a particular area. In his case, he was a trash collector, and one of his friends came to him and said, “You need to start working on Saturday. You can make time and a half on Saturday. You can make so much more if you would work on Saturday.” And his response—I’ve never forgotten—he said, “If I worked one Saturday, I will lose more in one day than you will make the rest of your life.” His friend could not understand that at all. But you and I understand it, don’t we? Because we’re comparing spiritual things with spiritual. It matters, and we make our judgments accordingly.

Our friends go off to see the latest movie, and you and I don’t think, “Oh, I want to go see the movie too.” You think, “Wait a minute. Is that appropriate? Is that the kind of subject that I want in my mind? Is that the kind of thing that I could sit there in the movie theater with Jesus Christ beside me? And if not, then maybe I really shouldn’t be there. It’s not appropriate for me.” We compare spiritual things with spiritual. We are told—we are commanded—to judge. We must judge. But we don’t judge by an earthly standard. We judge by a different standard.

Now he goes on to say: “Don’t be surprised if other people don’t agree with you.”

**Verse 14** *But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

[39:01]

Okay. The natural person doesn’t get this—doesn’t figure it out—because it’s only by the Spirit of God that you’re able to. Now consider some terms here. And again, I want to look at these

because I think they're very important terms. I know I'm getting a little technical in degree, but I think it can be helpful for us.

The natural man is one who's called *psuchikòs*. And it comes from *psychē* which means "the principle of physical life." It's often translated in the Greek—it's translated *the soul*. Now whenever we come across the word *soul*, we immediately say, "Well, it's not an immortal soul." And it's not. That's true. The Bible nowhere teaches the concept of an immortal soul. That comes from paganism—the ancient Greeks, and even before them. That comes from there.

DEFINITIONS	
<b>Natural</b>	= <i>psuchikòs</i> <i>psuché</i> = principle of physical life
<b>Spiritual</b>	= <i>pneumatikòs</i> <i>pneûma</i> = spirit

But the word is there, and what does it mean? Well, essentially, it means "life." It means "living." It means "what keeps you alive." Animals have *psuché*. They have this, as we were told in Genesis—the term there is *nephesh*—that they became "alive." They were *nepheshes*. Man became a *living* soul, a *nephesh*. But man had something else.

And he talks here about those who *are spiritual*. And the term *spiritual* there is *pneumatikòs*, from *pneûma*, which means *spirit*. Now we know in English today, we don't pronounce the "p" in either one of those, but in Greek, they did. *Pneûma* means *spirit*. The person who is *spiritual* is not composed of spirit, but they're guided by the Spirit of God. It has that sense of what he's talking about here.

So, the natural man, the person who just simply lives like everybody around him, doesn't receive the things of the Spirit of God. Why? *They are foolishness to him*. They don't even matter to him. They're not things that are important. And he can't know them, because the only way to know them is through the Spirit of God that he doesn't have.

When a person is without the Spirit of God, there are a lot of aspects of Christianity that can really seem out of touch with the real world. We're without God's Spirit before He calls us. But, you can also begin to cut yourself off from the Spirit of God when we live in a way that is contrary to God. In such a case, when somebody begins to do that, when someone begins to depart from the truth in the way that they live, it isn't just a physical thing that happens. When you move away from God, you move away from the Spirit of God. And if things can only be understood—if spiritual matters can only be understood through the Spirit of God, when you remove yourself from that Spirit, your understanding begins to fade.

[41:50]

And again, sadly, all of us have seen those things happen. We've seen people who began to live in a different way, and their knowledge that they once had—the truth that they once shared right along with us, sitting beside us in services—it seems to just disappear. It's like they don't remember it anymore. Probably like me, many of you have thought, "Well, you know, if I walked away from God, if I walked away from the truth and quit obeying Him, when the first Sabbath comes along, when sundown Friday comes, what would I feel? I mean, wouldn't I feel this tremendous guilt? And I would have to—I couldn't stand that."

But how do those people do it? Well, when you move yourself away from the Spirit of God, it doesn't take long before the light goes out. The light isn't in you and me on our own. We don't have that light. We don't have that wisdom. You quit obeying God and the light goes out, and you *grope for the wall at noonday like the blind*. That's what happens. We've seen it happen. And we all need to know it can happen to us.

Now he goes on to say:

**Verse 15** *But he who is spiritual judges all things, —*

This doesn't conflict with what Christ said back in **Matthew 7**, when He said, "*Judge not, lest you be judged.*" He's talking about condemning people. We're not in that position. That's not our job. It's Jesus Christ's job to judge people. But that doesn't mean we judge nothing. Jesus Christ also said to *judge with righteous judgment* [**John 7:24**].

Well, how do you do that? You judge—

[**1 Corinthians 2:15**] *But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.*

We judge by the spiritual standard we're given. We're judging spiritual things by spiritual standards, comparing spiritual things to spiritual. That's how we make judgments. We judge on that basis. We're not just looking at the physical.

So, *he who is spiritual—who is* (there's our term) *pneumatikòs*—who is living, guided by the Spirit of God, *judges...things*. He uses the Spirit of God—that power that God has made available to us—to examine and to make judgments.

[44:03]

We used to, years ago—if I use this as an example—years ago, when I was in Ambassador College, it was not uncommon for us to have, let's say, a standard of how long a lady's skirt should be. And I remember very well that, at one point when I first went to Ambassador College, the coeds all said, "Okay. A lady's skirt should be no higher than the middle of her knee." Okay. And then there was a point—I think we were in our senior year of college when Mr. Armstrong said, "Well, I don't see why it would be a problem if it were at the top of the knee." Well, immediately everybody got on board, and everything went to the top of the knee. Okay.

Now if you remember, back in those days miniskirts were popular, and so on. So, "top of the knee" was still pretty conservative. But we set a standard. We said, "Okay, this is it." Well, when you set that kind of a physical standard, a measurement standard, what do people do? Everybody goes right up to the edge. That's exactly it. You go to the edge.

Now, you know, today we don't have that kind of a physical standard. We don't meet you at the door with a tape measure to make sure it's okay. We don't check where your knees are to see if you've got the right length skirt. Does that mean we've set aside the requirement for a Christian woman to dress modestly? No. That requirement is just as much today as it's ever been. But instead of the Church trying to set a physical standard, we say, "You have the Spirit of God. Use

the Spirit of God to judge—to judge you, to judge what standard is appropriate for you.” Using the Spirit of God—not the standards of the world around us, not what appears on the runways of the fashion shows, not what's shown on all the magazines or in TV shows or anywhere else you want to go, that's not the standard. Use the Spirit of God. God says a woman should be modest. Okay, use the Spirit of God in your life, and judge by a spiritual standard. That's what God expects us to do. That's what it's for.

**Carnal** = *sarkikós*  
*sarx* = flesh, body

All that goes into making a *person*—personality, character, intellect, natural abilities, etc.

...leaving God out of the equation.

Now, I'm not picking on the ladies. There are a lot of other ways we can use that. There are many areas in our lives where we need to look and see, “Is this really appropriate? Does the Spirit of God lead me to believe this is the right standard?”—because that's the standard that we're supposed to use.

Now he says: *judge* this. Now, it's interesting that the word *judge*—the word here is *anakrinei*—it has the sense not only of making a judgment, but of acting on that judgment. Both of those things are involved in this concept here. It tells us that we are in the process of judging and acting accordingly. We are examining things.

[46:44]

Is it saying here that *he who is spiritual judges all things, but he himself is rightly judged by no one*? Well, there are people who really don't have the ability to judge. If we were using, again, that standard of modesty, your friends and neighbors may not judge that that's the right standard. They may have different standards. We know that there are people out there, there are religious groups, where the ladies never cut their hair; they wear their skirts down to the ground; and they never wear makeup. Okay, they would probably judge most of you ladies pretty harshly in the way that you judge, even though you may very well be modest. But they have a different standard. They're not judging by the same standard. So, what they think really isn't the standard that you judge by. They're not really capable of judging those things. A person who is spiritual, judging by the Spirit of God, has a different standard.

**Verse 16** (He says) *For “who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.*

Okay, it's telling us here that, again, the person who doesn't have the Spirit of God obviously can't have the mind of God. It's not there. It doesn't come from that. But it also is telling us that if you have the Spirit of God in you, you have access to the mind of Jesus Christ. You can pray. You can study. You can ask for guidance, and God will help you to understand on a spiritual level that other people just simply don't have.

Alright, let's move on to **chapter 3** because, again, Paul is continuing the thoughts that are here.

**1** (He says) *And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.*

Okay, what do we mean by that? Well, let's look at our words once again. *Carnal*—I mentioned the word before—*sarkikós*. It comes from *sarx*, which means “flesh” or “body.” It's not something evil. God gave us a body. It's a wonderful body. It's an amazing creation that God put together. It's not of itself evil, nor is it of itself good. It's just simply neutral. It's a body. It's our flesh.

But, there's more to the sense of this because, in part what it means is, “all that goes into making up a person: their personality, their character, their intellect, their natural abilities”—all of those things. I know we said, “Doesn't that have to do with the *spirit in man*?” Yes, it does, because every person has that *spirit in man*. There's nobody who doesn't have that. Every human being has that.

And, as he says here, “*brethren*, you are—I have to *speak to you* like *carnal* people.” Okay. So, people can be carnal—those who don't have the Spirit of God. Now, again, when we think about *carnal*, if you were to look it up in the dictionary, it probably has a certain sexual connotation to it. But that's not the sense in the Bible. The Bible [definition] just simply means, “all that goes into making up a person—all the characteristics that are there.”

[49:54]

On the one end—if we were to look at a big spectrum, on the one end there would be those individuals who are probably the worst of all human beings that history has shown us—the Joseph Stalins, the Pol Pots, the criminals, the worst of their kind. And on the other end, we would find those individuals who probably, in the eyes of the world, would look pretty good—the Billy Grahams, the Mother Teresas, the “good people” of the world, who didn't know the truth of God. And they did many, many wonderful things, and we don't condemn any of those folks. We're not—it's not our job to sit in judgment, in condemnation of them.

But basically, there's one more aspect of this definition. It's all that goes into making a person—personality, character, intellect, natural abilities—leaving God out of the equation. It's everything—leaving God out. No—sure, there are people on some ends of the spectrum here who may give some kind of service to God, who may genuinely think they're serving God, but without the Spirit of God, their service is flawed.

Now do we condemn them? No. I personally believe that when Mother Teresa and Billy Graham are given the knowledge of the truth, when God chooses to call them, I think they're going to be wonderful Christians. I think they're going to put most of us to shame. But right now, no, they fit in that definition of “carnal”—people who leave God out of the picture, who live their lives without really making decisions based upon God and what His Spirit reveals.

So, he says:

[1 Corinthians 3:] **1** *And I, brethren, (So he is using the term “brethren” again.) I could not speak to you as to spiritual people (people who are guided by the Spirit of God) but as to carnal (people who don't think about God), as to babes in Christ.*

All of us have had that experience in our lives where we have failed to think about God, where we've done things, made decisions, and look back later and said, “Why did I do that? That didn't



make sense. If I had been thinking about what God said, I wouldn't have done it that way—but I didn't think about it. I left God out.” We've all done that at times.

[52:06]

So, Paul goes on to say to these people in Corinth—he calls them *brethren*. Now again, this tells us something. He calls them *brethren*, but he said, “I have to talk to you like you're carnal.” So it's possible for a converted person to be carnal. You can have the Spirit of God, but if you fail to use it, and you fail to consider what God says, then you're just like the people who don't have it at all. So he said, “This is the way I had to deal with you.”

He said, **verse 2**:

*I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; (You're still not able, not mature enough to take this.)*

Now, again he uses a very simple metaphor—milk and meat compared here, in that sense, because we recognize that when a child is very young, very small, a baby, you can't feed them food, heavy food; you can't feed them meat. You can't even feed them certain cereals until their digestive system develops to a certain point. They're designed to need mother's milk. That's what they need. And by giving them that, they get the nutrition that they need so that they can grow to the point where they can take in some of these other things as time goes by.

You and I don't want to continue to live entirely on milk. We want more than that because we're adult. We can't just do as a baby does. But he says, “I had to give you spiritual *milk* because that's all you could handle. *You're not able to receive* more than that, and *you're still not.*”

The word he uses here for “food” is *brōma*. It doesn't mean flesh or meat; it just means “any solid food” — “I couldn't give you something solid.”

Now there's a parallel account here—a parallel scriptural concept, at least—in **Hebrews chapter 5 verses 12 through 14**.

He says:

**[Hebrews 5:12]** *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

It takes a level of maturity to be able to use God's Word properly. God's Spirit enables us to do that. It enables us to grow, but we have to use that Spirit to grow. And basically, what Paul is saying to the Church in Corinth is that: “Many of you have received the Spirit; you are brethren, but you're not really thinking like Christians are supposed to think. You're leaving God out of the picture. You're looking at yourself. You're looking at your own ability. You're comparing yourself to each other. That's not what you're supposed to do.”

[55:02]

So, he says in **verse 3**:

*for you are still carnal. —*

Yes, they're converted. But a converted person who leaves God out is just as carnal as the person who doesn't know God in the first place.

He goes on to say:

**[Verse 3]** —*For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?*

This is the way human beings conduct themselves apart from God. This is what they do. They conduct themselves in that way, and they don't consider God.

Now each of those words you could study some aspects of it. I think especially the word *divisions* is a word that means, not necessarily a separating in one sense, but it's kind of "standing apart." It's kind of, you're in the same area, but you're just not really with those people. There's not a bond. There's not that closeness that's supposed to be there.

So, he goes on to illustrate this by what he said in **chapter 1**:

**[1 Corinthians 3:4]** *For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?*

Aren't you just like the people out there in the world who choose their heroes? Oh, in our world today, the hero may be in a political party, and people choose an individual, and they champion that individual no matter what they seem to do, just because, "Well, they're the right party, and I don't like the other guys." And isn't that carnal? Isn't that the way the world thinks—and not the way which Christians are supposed to think?

So, now again, you might note something else here. There were individuals who were choosing Paul as their hero. They were saying, "*I am of Paul.*" And Paul says, "You're carnal. Don't choose me. I'm not looking for a following." If you choose one over another, you choose up sides, you oppose someone else, you're carnal.

[57:05]

In **Romans chapter 16**, the last chapter of **Romans**, Paul wrote this in **verses 17** and **18**.

**[Romans 16:17]** (He says) *Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine (the teaching) which you learned, and avoid them. 18 For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.*

Paul says, **[1 Corinthians 3] verse 5**:

*Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, (Who are we? Why in the world would you want to follow one of us? We're simply) ministers, (or servants, in the sense of the word.) through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one?*

God's given to each of us a different responsibility. We don't all come and do the same thing. We don't all carry out the same responsibility. But it's God who gave the responsibilities. It's Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church who assigns those responsibilities to different individuals.

Paul says, "I didn't go to Jesus Christ and say, 'Okay, here's what I can do. Use me.' "

He says, "Jesus Christ gave me this responsibility. Who's Apollos? Well, Apollos has certain characteristics that I don't have. He has strengths that I don't have. And Jesus Christ uses him to serve God's people with his strengths. But, it isn't because Apollos came along and said, 'Wow, I'm—I'm so much a better speaker than Paul. You should send me there.' No, Apollos had no such thought in his mind."

He says in **verse 6**:

*I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.*

"It isn't something that I did. Okay, I'm the first one who came on the scene. I'm the one from whom you heard the truth. It's wonderful. It's a wonderful opportunity for me. I'm grateful for it. And Apollos came along, and he watered. (Well, water is sometimes used as a symbol of God's Spirit.) Apollos came along, and he added to what was already planted and enabled it to flourish. That's wonderful. But neither one of us gave the increase. I could plant all day long, and if God doesn't cause the seed to germinate and grow, it won't do any good. Apollos can water as long as he wants, but if the seed doesn't germinate and grow, it's not going to produce anything. It is only God who builds life within that seed and enables it to grow. So, you have to keep a certain perspective there—that it is God who gives the increase—not us."

[59:46]

So, he says, **verse 8**:

*Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.*

Okay, we've been given different responsibilities, and some of those responsibilities, because they're different, may seem more important than others, but God's the one who gives the responsibility, and it is to Him that we are accountable.

Let's tie in one more passage here, and we'll close for today. In **Luke chapter 12 verses 47 and 48**, a principle that we recognize:

**[Luke 12:47]** *And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. 48 But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is*

*given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.*

Those who've been given different responsibilities have a different accountability before God. We each have a certain responsibility, and we are accountable to God for what we do with it. But it is God who gives the increase. Since only God can give the increase, He doesn't reward based upon the amount of the increase, but based upon the labor involved, regardless of that, and what we do.

Well, Paul's going to move in the next verse to a new metaphor that has to do with a building. So, let's stop there for this particular class, and in class 5 we will begin in **1 Corinthians 3** and **verse 9**.

Thank you for joining us.

[1:01:28]