

Series: 2 Corinthians

Title: Revelation by the Spirit of God

Text: 1 Corinthians 2: 9-11

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1 Corinthians 2: 9: But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10: But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11: For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

The point in these verses is very clear. But it is a point that stirs up the enmity in the natural heart of sinners. The point is this. Spiritual things of God are not known by the flesh, but only by God revealing them unto us by his Spirit. Carnal flesh cannot know spiritual things. Only the Spirit of God can reveal spiritual things. And that revelation is to the new spirit put in us which was not there before. Our subject is “Revelation by the Spirit of God” Our text says, “God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.”

EYE HATH NOT SEEN

First, our text declares that by man’s own natural flesh no man has ever known spiritual things—“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. (1 Cor 2: 9)

The apostle Paul quotes from Isaiah 64. This was true of sinners as far back as Isaiah’s day. But it goes back even further than Isaiah’s day. Isaiah wrote, “For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.” (Is 64: 4)

Since Adam sinned, since sin entered, since all flesh died spiritually, since the beginning of the world, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

The eye, ear and heart spoken of here are instruments of our fleshly part. When it comes to all other knowledge—carnal knowledge—we use these carnal senses to see, and hear, and discover and execute knowledge.

I have family members who are very skilled at getting knowledge and performing impressive tasks. My father can break down almost any kind of engine and put it back together again. My father-in-law continually thinks of new things to do, just to challenge himself. Many men are very skilled using the natural eye, ear, and heart to discover and do.

But that is NOT how spiritual things are understood and believed. The eye, ear and heart are of the flesh but the things of God are spiritual. Spiritual things must be understood in spirit. Our natural man is carnal. The carnal mind cannot understand spiritual things.

The apostle Paul declared, “For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.” (Rom 7: 14) The “law” spoken of is the law given by God on Mt. Sinai. But in scripture the “law” also applies to all the word of God. The word of God is spiritual. But Paul says, “I am carnal, sold under sin.”

Paul writes this as a regenerated believer. Those given a new spirit by God, still have an old man of flesh, which is still carnal, still sold under sin. Our carnal flesh never understands, never believes, never profits us ever—not before or after regeneration. Christ said, “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing:” (Jn 6: 63) This is why Christ told Nicodemus, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God....That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” (Jn 3: 3, 6)

Read verse 9 again carefully. God says of the natural flesh, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

BLIND TO OUR BLINDNESS

There is another problem. Of ourselves, we cannot even see, nor admit, that we are spiritually blind.

Our natural eye, ear, and heart can be easily, overwhelmingly impressed. So much so, that sinners insist they have spiritual light when in fact they are blind.

The past few days, we have seen the people's pope, in his white robe, with the pomp and circumstance surrounding him. It appeals to the natural eye, and ear, and tugs at the natural heart of religious sinners. Folks will argue that they have seen something spiritual in those things.

But it is sin itself to imagine that by our flesh, we see, hear, and understand spiritual things. This is the sin which makes unregenerate, religious sinners defend their wisdom, will and works. Our carnal flesh thinks we are as gods: self-wise, self-righteous, self-holy, self-made religious men.

This is the thing only believers understand about spiritual sight and spiritually blindness. The sinner who is spiritually blind will argue that he sees spiritual things by his own ability, despite God saying it is impossible. While the sinner God has given true spiritual sight will confesses that he is blind without God's revelation.

John 9: 39: And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. 40: And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? 41: Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

Get what our Savior declares there. It is sin itself to say that we see spiritual things on our own apart from divine revelation. The first sin Christ must save us from is the sin of self-reliance, self-seeing, self-hearing, self-knowing, self-believing. The idol "self" must be slain. God has given spiritual sight when the sinner sees his blindness and cries, "Who is the Son of God, Lord, that I might believe on him?"

Some imagine that everyone comes in and hears the gospel preached. Then some decide to believe while others decide not to believe. They imagine the difference is made by the sinner making his decision for God. Not so! God says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

How then do we see and hear and believe with the heart? Who makes the difference?

BUT GOD

It is God alone who reveals spiritual things—"But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." (1 Cor 2: 10)

"But God hath revealed." Who revealed? "But God hath revealed."

To whom does God reveal? "But God hath revealed *them* unto us." The "us" are all who truly believe God. There are no exceptions here. This is how all sinners are brought to know and believe on Christ—by divine revelation.

By whom does God reveal these things? "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." Christ said of God the Holy Spirit,

John 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 16:13: Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14: He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

THE SPIRIT SEARCHETH ALL THINGS

The Spirit of God hears from God and speaks into the hearts of God's people—"for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor 2: 10)

What are the deep things of God that the Spirit searches and reveals to his people? Men and women learn all sorts of Bible facts such as the names of the twelve tribes in Israel, the names of the kings and the judges. But those are not the deep things of God.

The deep things of God are "how can a man be justified with God? Or how can he be clean *that is* born of a woman?" (Job 25: 4) The deep things of God deal with sin, righteousness and judgment. The Lord said,

John 16: 8: And when [the Holy Spirit] is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9: Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10: Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11: Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

AN ILLUSTRATION

He gives a simple illustration in our text—“the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” (1 Cor 2: 10-11)

What if I began to tell you what I think one of you will do? Only the spirit which is in you knows what you will do. “Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”

The only way for me to know what you will do is for you to tell me. Likewise, the only way for God’s child to know what God has prepared for them is for God to tell us by his Spirit. Christ said the Holy Spirit “shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.” (1 Cor 2: 14)

THINGS REVEALED

Lastly, what does the Spirit of God reveal? The Holy Spirit reveals “the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” These are things “God hath prepared” and things “God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit.” (1 Cor 2: 9-10) God prepared them; God reveals them.

What has God prepared for his people? What has the Spirit of God revealed to us that God has prepared for us?

In our experience of grace, the first thing revealed to us that God hath prepared for us is the spiritual ear and the spiritual eye—“The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.” (Pro 20: 12) God promised,

Ezekiel 36: 25: Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26: A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27: And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*.

So the sinner who argues that he knows divine things by his own fleshly seeking betrays his own blindness. The Spirit of God reveals to his child that God alone prepares the new, spiritual heart.

Also, the Spirit of God reveals the things God has prepared for us in Christ from eternity. God prepared all spiritual blessings for his people from eternity according as he chose us in Christ. All the things that Christ prepared in time, God prepared in eternity in Christ. Christ called it “the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” (Mt 25: 34) God makes known “the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.” (Rom 9: 23)

Then the Spirit of God reveals things God prepared on the cross. Christ said, “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (Jn 14: 3) Christ prepared full, complete redemption from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us. Redemption is prepared. It is finished. There is nothing to be added. Christ prepared justification, righteousness for his people, and Christ is our Righteousness. Righteousness is not prepared for when we believe. Christ already prepared his robe of righteousness. In time appointed, the Righteousness of Christ is revealed to them for whom it is prepared and imputed to us through God-given faith. Christ prepared entrance and acceptance into God’s presence for us. It is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit that Christ is that new and living way to the Father. He is our great High Priest in the true holiest of holies. It is by his blood—by the preparation ready-made by Christ—that we draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.

Also, the Spirit of God reveals to us that God has prepared something future for them that love God. God has prepared a heavenly city for his elect. “God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.” (Heb 11: 16) “I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” (Rev 21: 2) The city of God is made up of God’s elect, Christ’s bride, prepared for glory by Christ our Husband, for Christ our Husband. Our heavenly inheritance is prepared for us and reserved for us and we shall have it because Christ said, “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

Now, let it be settled! God declares that in the history of the world “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” Listen to this world’s gospel and you will know that it is true. They speak by the spirit of the world.

But here is the blessing of grace. God not only prepared the things that he gives to them that love him, God hath also revealed them unto us by his Spirit. This is why you will hear God’s true child only giving glory to God and not unto ourselves.

Amen!