Principles for Christian Thinking

I Corinthians 2:6-16

"Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature"
*(**1 Cor. 14:20**)*

> "Christianity recognizes and affirms the importance of the intellect. The life of the mind is understood to be a central issue of Christian discipleship. The Christian is not only to live in obedience to Christ, but is also to serve Christ through the development of a distinctively Christian mind." –**Albert Mohler**, "The Glory of God and the Life of the Mind," 2

"Trinitarian" principles for Christian thinking:

1) We have revelation from God *(v. 6-9)*
2) We have the Holy Spirit *(v. 10-15)*
3) We have the mind of Christ *(v. 16)*

1. We have revelation from God *(v. 6-9)*

what God has hidden

- God determined to prevent man from finding him by human wisdom (**1:21**).

- Three sources that failed to produce a saving message (**v. 9**):
  - *"what no eye has seen"* — facts from empirical investigation
  - *"nor ear heard"* — traditional knowledge in a community
  - *"nor the heart of man imagined"* — intuitive insight

the great divide

- The fundamental problem with human-oriented and human-derived wisdom is this: *it is of this age.*

- The believer and unbeliever live in two different time-zones.

unveiling the concealed

- The solution: *revelation* (**v. 7, 10**)

- We have a sure Word from God, written in a book (**2 Timothy 3:16**).

  *"the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." (**Ephesians 3:3-4**)*

- Some characters who deny that God has spoken and given us truth that can be understood:
  - **The Rationalist** – "I'll only accept what is reasonable to me."
  - **The Skeptic** – "Do you really believe what those ancient, superstitious people thought?"
  - **The Postmodern** – "Limited beings like you and I are too humble for 'Truth.' Claims to truth are simply claims to power."
  - **The Emotionalist** – "Do what feels right. God doesn't want you to think but to feel."
  - **The Mystic** – "God has shown me what this means. Why are you quoting a verse to me?"

- We cannot know God fully, but we can know him truly. The Christian is called to think the thoughts of God after him.

- Since the world cannot know God by its own thinking, evangelism is absolutely necessary.

  *"How are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?" (**Romans 10:14**)*

2. We have the Holy Spirit *(v. 10-15)*

our fallen condition

*"the gospel is veiled to those who are perishing" (**2 Cor. 4:3**)*.

"Faced with God's revelation, the unbeliever is like an ass at a concert" –**John Calvin**

- God has intentionally designed the gospel to be a pointed assault on human pride.

new spiritual eyes

*"no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (**1 Cor. 12:3**).*

> "There has not only been an objective, public act of divine self-disclosure in the crucifixion of God's own Son, but there must also be a private work of God, by his Spirit, in the mind and heart of the individual. …If we should express unqualified gratitude for God for the gift of his Son, we should express no less gratitude to God for the gift of his Spirit who enables us to grasp the gospel of his Son."
> –**D.A. Carson**, *The Cross and Christian Ministry: Leadership Lessons from 1 Corinthians,* 52

accurate judgments made by those who are not judged

- Belle Block: *"I know my boy."*

3. We have the mind of Christ *(v. 16)*

- What are we to do with this information? We are to love God with our mind and live in humility and service to others.

1 Corinthians 3:1-4 *vs.* **Philippians 2:3-9**

- What God has joined together: thinking & serving