

**HWMR: EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST (2) (Week 15)**

*Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 1:2, 23-24, 30; Rom. 6:6, 19, 22; Eph. 1:9, 11; 3:11*

**God's Power and God's Wisdom**

- 1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:
- 1 Cor 1:23 But we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness,
- 1 Cor 1:24 But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
- 1 Cor 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,
- Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin as slaves;
- Rom 6:19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to uncleanness and lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness unto sanctification.
- Rom 6:22 But now, having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end, eternal life.
- Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
- Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,
- Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

**Day 1**

*1 Corinthians 1:23-24 - But we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

**I. Before mentioning Christ as the power of God and the wisdom of God in 1 Corinthians 1:24 Paul, in verse 23, declares, “We preach Christ **crucified**, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness”:**

- A. This indicates that the Christ who is the power of God and the wisdom of God for the carrying out of God's economy is the **crucified Christ**, a Christ who did not do anything to save Himself— v. 24.
- B. In man's eyes, if a person is **crucified**, he is deemed **powerless**, because a powerful person would not allow himself to be crucified; nevertheless, the **Christ** who is the **power of God** was **crucified**.
- C. Furthermore, from the **human perspective**, a wise person would find ways to avoid crucifixion, yet the **Christ** who is the **wisdom of God** was **crucified**—Gal. 2:20.

First Corinthians 1:24 says, “To those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” Here those who are called refers to the believers who were chosen by God in eternity (Eph. 1:4) and who believed in Christ in time (Acts 13:48). To these called ones, the crucified Christ preached by the apostles is the power of God and the wisdom of God. It seemed to both the miracle-seeking religious Jews, who require signs, and the wisdom-seeking philosophical Greeks that Christ was crucified as a fool (1 Cor. 1:22-23). Because both to Jews and Greeks Christ was nothing, they rejected and despised Christ. To the Jews, the crucified Christ was a stumbling block, and to Greeks, He was foolishness. But to those who believe in Him and call upon His name, He is the power of God and the wisdom of God for them to be delivered from all negative things. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 3119*)

## Day 2

*Romans 6:6* - Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin as slaves;

*Galatians 2:20* - I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

D. The **crucified Christ** is the **power of God**—1 Cor. 1:24:

1. In the **cross** of Christ we see **God's power**.
2. It takes the power of God to **defeat** Satan, the world, sin, fallen man, the flesh, the natural life, the old creation, and the ordinances.
3. The death of Christ—His crucifixion—has become the power of God—v. 24.

E. The **crucified Christ** is the **wisdom of God**—2:7:

1. In order to **accomplish** anything, we need **Christ as both power and wisdom**—1:24.
2. **Wisdom** is for **planning** and **purposing**, whereas **power** is for **carrying out** and **accomplishing** what is planned and purposed.

The crucified Christ as God's power and wisdom can be applied to the problem we face with our temper. Without exception, we all are bothered by our temper. Who can say that he has never lost his temper? After experiencing a certain amount of growth in life, we come to hate our temper and long to be free from it. I know of some sisters who, shortly before the day of their wedding, made a vow that they would never again lose their temper, especially never lose it with their husband. However, in every case this vow was broken. Not only in married life but in all kinds of situations in our daily life, we are troubled by our temper. (*Life-Study of 1 Corinthians, Message 8*)

## Day 3

*Ephesians 1:9* - Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,

*Colossians 1:9* - Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

3. When we **experience** the crucified Christ, He becomes to us not only the power of God but also the wisdom of God—Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20.
  4. The crucified Christ as God's wisdom is related to God's deep and profound plan according to His good pleasure and also according to God's way to fulfill His will—Eph. 1:9, 11; 3:11:
    - a. Since we have the crucified Christ as God's wisdom, there is no need for us to seek a way to carry out God's will.
    - b. Simply by **experiencing** the crucified Christ, we **spontaneously** have a way to do God's will.
    - c. We become very wise in doing the will of God—Col. 1:9; 4:12.
    - d. As long as we experience the crucified Christ, Christ will become to us God's wisdom to fulfill His plan; we will have the wisdom of God to do His will—1:9.
- F. When we experience the crucified Christ, we are **terminated**—Gal. 2:20:
1. All that we are, all that we have, and all that we can do—all is **completely terminated**.
  2. When we **call** on the name of the Lord Jesus, as we are experiencing and enjoying Him, His crucifixion will **terminate** us.
  3. Christ crucified is not only the power but also the way for us to be **delivered** from the flesh, the natural life, and the old creation.

As believers in Christ, we all must be able to answer this question: Why was it necessary for Christ to be crucified? In his preaching to the philosophical Greeks at Corinth, Paul must have indicated why it was necessary for Christ to be crucified. Perhaps the most common answer to this question is to say that Christ had to be crucified in order for God to save us. God cannot save us apart from the crucifixion of Christ. According to the New Testament, God has no way to save anyone apart from the cross of Christ. Let us consider briefly why this is so.

In the universe there are many kinds of problems. There are the problems of Satan, the world, and sin. There is also the problem of man. The man created by God for His purpose fell and became sinful. Other problems related to man are the flesh and the natural life. In addition, everything in the universe has become old; that is, it has become rotten, corrupt. Anything that is not corrupt cannot be old. Oldness indicates a shortage of life. When a tree grows, it has life. But when it begins to die, there is a shortage of life. Because of Satan, the world, and man with sin, the flesh, and the natural life, the whole universe, including the heavens and the earth, has become old, corrupt, ruined, and full of death.

In addition to all these problems, there is the problem of the ordinances and regulations given by God for man's living. Therefore, the cross deals with the problems of Satan, the world, sin, man, the flesh, the natural life, oldness, and ordinances. In order for these problems to be solved, it was necessary for Christ to be crucified.

Before Christ could be crucified to solve all these problems, He had to put on human nature. This means that He had to become a man, a creature. By becoming a man, Christ became a creature. He took on human nature, not only for the purpose of dying for us and of shedding His blood for our sins, but also for the purpose of solving the problems of Satan, the world, sin, fallen man, the natural life, flesh, oldness, and ordinances.

Although Christ could have refused death by crucifixion, He was crucified. According to the human understanding, Christ was executed by others. However, His understanding of His death was different. In John 10:11 the Lord Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep." Concerning His life, the Lord goes on to say in John 10:18, "No one takes it away from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it again." His life was not taken from Him. On the contrary, He gave up His life for us. If Christ had not been willing to lay down His life, it would not have been possible for people to execute Him. Instead of fighting for Himself, Christ accepted the death of the cross. He was willing to be crucified in order to accomplish redemption and solve all the problems in the universe. Christ crucified is an offense to those who seek signs, and foolishness to those who seek wisdom. But to us who believe He is God's power and wisdom. (*Life-Study of 1 Corinthians, Message 8*)

## Day 4

*1 Corinthians 1:2* - To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:

*Philippians 4:13* - I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me.

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### II. As those who are **called by God**, we need to know and experience Christ's power and wisdom—1 Cor. 1:24:

- A. First Corinthians 1:2 mentions “the called saints”:
  - 1. The believers in Christ are called **saints**, not called to be saints; this is a positional matter, a sanctification in position with a view to sanctification indisposition.
  - 2. To call upon the name of the Lord implies **to believe** into Him—Rom. 10:14.
  - 3. All the believers in the Lord should be **callers**—Acts 9:14, 21; 22:16.
  - 4. We have been **called to call**, called by God to call upon the name of the Lord.
  - 5. To those called by God, **Christ** is the **power of God** and the wisdom of God.
- B. *Those who are called* (1 Cor. 1:24) refers to the believers who were **chosen by God** in eternity (Eph. 1:4) and who **believed** in Christ in time (Acts 13:48).
- C. To those who **believe** in Christ and **call** upon His name, He is the **power of God** and the **wisdom of God**.
- D. Christ crucified is the **power of God** for **saving** us and the **wisdom of God** for **fulfilling** His plan:
  - 1. Power is the **ability**, and wisdom is the **way**.
  - 2. Christ is **first** our power, and **then** He is our wisdom, that is, our way.
  - 3. Christ is the power of God to carry out God's economy, and He is also the wisdom of God, the way of God, to carry out God's economy.
- E. **Christ as the power of God** **strengthens** us with a dynamic power, **supplying** and **sustaining** us in what we are and what we do:
  - 1. In all our circumstances and conditions, Christ as the power of God enables us to **suffer**, to **bear burdens**, and to **stand firm**.
  - 2. He also **sustains** us to the point of being unshakable; for this reason, Paul declares, “I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me”—Phil. 4:13.
  - 3. Christ as the power of God is **daily supplying** and **sustaining** us through His divine dispensing.
- F. Christ as the wisdom of God **flows unceasingly** from God to us to be our present and practical wisdom in our experience—1 Cor. 1:24.

### III. “Of Him you are in Christ Jesus, **who became wisdom to us from God**: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption”—v. 30:

- A. In this verse Paul does not say that Christ became our wisdom; instead, he says that Christ became wisdom “to us from God”:
  - 1. The expression *to us from God* indicates something **present**, **practical**, **experiential**, and **ongoing** in the way of transmission.
  - 2. For Christ to become wisdom to us from God indicates that there is the **transmission** of Christ as wisdom from God to us for our daily experience.
  - 3. We need Christ **continually** as wisdom to us from God.
- B. Christ became wisdom to us from God as **three vital things** in God's salvation:

In verse 30 I appreciate the two phrases “to us” and “from God.” Christ became wisdom to us from God. The expression “to us from God” indicates something present, practical, and experiential in the way of transmission. Continually, Christ must become wisdom to us from God. This indicates a living, ongoing transmission. The words “to” and “from” indicate that a present, living, and practical transmission is taking place from God to us.

Paul composed verse 30 in the way he did in order to indicate to the believers in Corinth that Christ should continually become wisdom to them from God. Christ as wisdom should unceasingly flow from God to them. However, their actual situation was contrary to this. Christ may have been their wisdom, but He was not presently flowing to them from God. Once again I wish to point out that Paul does not say, “Christ is God’s wisdom,” or “Christ is your wisdom.” He says, “Christ became wisdom to us from God.” This indicates that Christ should continually flow from God to us and be our present and practical wisdom in our experience.

It is important for us to learn to apply the Bible to our experience. The Bible is not primarily a book of doctrine; it is a book of life, and life is a matter of experience. What is revealed in the Bible must be living to us and applicable to us in our experience. (*Life-Study of 1 Corinthians, Message 9*)

### Day 5

*1 Corinthians 1:30* - But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

*Romans 6:22* - But now, having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end, eternal life.

1. He is our **righteousness** (for our past), by which we have been justified by God, that we might be reborn in our spirit to receive the divine life—Rom. 5:18.
2. He is our **sanctification** (for our present), by which we are being sanctified in our soul, that is, transformed in our mind, emotion, and will, with His divine life—6:19, 22.

In 1:30 Paul says that Christ Jesus “became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” Paul does not say that Christ is wisdom to us; he says that Christ became wisdom to us. This indicates that at one time Christ was not wisdom to us, but that He later became wisdom to us. For example, to say that I am your friend is somewhat different from saying that I became your friend. To say that I became your friend implies that once I was not your friend, but now I have become a friend to you. Christ could not become wisdom to us before we were in Him. But when we believed in Christ, God put us into Him. Then Christ became wisdom to us.

Suppose that a certain young lady is in poverty. One day she marries a millionaire. On that very day she becomes rich. Formerly she was poor, but now she has become rich. In a similar way, formerly, because we were not yet in Him, Christ was not wisdom to us. But once we believed into Christ and God put us in Him, He became wisdom to us. (*Life-Study of 1 Corinthians, Message 6*)

Notice that in verse 30 Paul does not say that Christ became our wisdom; he says that Christ became wisdom to us. For Christ to become wisdom to us is different from His becoming our wisdom. Day by day, we need Christ to be wisdom to us. We may again use electricity as an illustration. To speak of our electricity is different from speaking of electricity being to us. When electricity is to you, you receive an electrical charge. For electricity to be your electricity means that it belongs to you, but for electricity to be to you means that it is transmitted to you and that you experience it. Likewise, to say that Christ is our wisdom is rather general, not experiential. But when Christ becomes wisdom to us, we experience Him.

Paul had not only knowledge but also a great deal of spiritual experience. Furthermore, he knew the situation among the believers. As Christians, we may say, “We have Christ as our wisdom.” However, this does not mean very much in experience. It is similar to saying, “We have electricity as our power.” We may say this and actually not have light or heat, because electricity is not yet to us. We may also have Christ as our wisdom without having Christ being wisdom to us. We need Christ to become wisdom to us. (*Life-Study of 1 Corinthians, Message 6*)

#### Day 6

*Romans 8:23* - And not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body.

*Philippians 3:21* - Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.

3. He is our **redemption** (for our future), that is, the redemption of our body (8:23), by which we will be transfigured in our body with His divine life to have His glorious likeness (Phil. 3:21).
4. It is **of God** that we **participate** in such a complete and perfect salvation, which makes our entire being—spirit, soul, and body—organically one with Christ and makes Christ everything to us.
5. This is **altogether of God**, not of ourselves, that we may boast and glory in Him, not in ourselves—Eph. 3:20-21.

Paul’s word in 1 Corinthians 1:30 concerning our being in Christ is related to the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity. On the one hand, God has put us into Christ positionally. This makes it possible for us to experience the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity. On the other hand, the more God in Christ has dispensed Himself into us, the more we are transferred into Christ experientially. Although through Christ’s redemption God has already transferred us from Adam into Christ, according to our actual experience we have been transferred into Christ only in part. From the standpoint of our position, we have already been transferred into Christ as the result of God’s work, and we are now in Christ. But experientially we are not yet wholly in Christ. Therefore, God is continually seeking to dispense Christ into our being in order that we may be transferred into Christ experientially more and more. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 307*)