Chapter Two

First Corinthians, chapter two consists of a description of God’s power and wisdom towards believers. His power is evident in the means by which He instructs us (1st Cor. 2:1-5). His wisdom is vital for believers in the midst of angelic conflict (vv.6-9). His power and wisdom allows believers to function in a spiritual manner (vv.10-16).

Power in Teaching

1. Paul used his own example, which the Corinthians witnessed, to illustrate how the power of the Word of God is manifest (1st Cor. 2:1-5).
   a. Paul came to them. He went to where they were and proclaimed the Gospel (cf. Rom. 10:14).
   b. Paul’s willingness to be the example is an important concept for Pastors to apply (1st Cor. 4:16; 1st Pet. 5:3; 2nd Tim. 3:10,11).

2. Paul did not impress the Corinthians with superior speech or wisdom (1st Cor. 2:1,4). ὑπεροχή #5427: elevation, pre-eminence, superiority. P= The power of teaching is not derived from the persuasiveness of the teacher (1st Cor. 1:17; 2:1,4,13).

3. Paul publicly proclaimed the testimony (mystery) of God (1st Cor. 2:1). Καταγγέλλω #2605: to proclaim publicly, publish. There is a textual question in this verse, primarily between two options.
   a. μαρτύριον #3142: eyewitness testimony. Ἰ 2 B D F G Ψ 33 1739 1881 Ἰ b vg sy Ἰ sa
   b. μυστήριον #3466: mystery, hidden counsel. Ἰ ὑπεροχή I ὑπεροχή ὑπεροχή ὑπεροχή ὑπεροχή A C pc a r sy ὑπεροχή bo; Hipp BasA Ambst
   c. Regardless of whether Paul proclaimed God’s testimony, or God’s mystery, he was a herald of God’s verbal message and a living demonstration of God’s power.

4. In his ministry to the Corinthians, Paul was determined that the crucified Christ would be the simple, repeated message for their salvation (1st Cor. 2:2).

5. Paul’s arrival in Corinth was a low-point for him on the second missionary journey (1st Cor. 2:3; Acts 18:1-4).

6. Evangelizing and teaching the Word are demonstrations of the Holy Spirit and power (1st Cor. 2:4).
   a. ἀπόδειξις #585: demonstration, proof. Used only here. ἀποδείκνυ #584: to exhibit; to prove, demonstrate (Acts 2:22; 25:7; 1st Cor. 4:9; 2nd Thess. 2:4).
   b. Evangelizing and teaching the Word are not exercises in philosophical or logical proof, but the Truth of God is proven through the power of the Holy Spirit within the soul of the believer.

7. As a result of the spiritually powerful manner through which the Word is ministered, believers can function in the Christian Way of Life with absolute confidence (1st Cor. 2:5).
Vital Wisdom

1. Church Age doctrine is the grace blessing of God for the believers of this mature dispensation (1st Cor. 2:6a,7).
   a. Pres.act.ind. of λαλέω #2980 indicates that the continuous verbally-preached teaching of this age is the hidden, mystery doctrine of the Church.
   b. The τέλειος #5046 mature believers of this age are such by the grace of God which designed His Revelation to be manifest through deliberate progression (Heb. 11:40; 1st Pet. 1:12).
      1) Prior to the revelation of this mystery, Old Testament saints functioned in an imperfect sphere, anticipating “something better” (Heb. 11:40).
      2) During the revelation of this mystery (in the Dispensation of the Church: Age of the Apostles) the picture began to become clear as the New Testament was written and the perfect came (the completion of the canon of Scripture) (1st Cor. 13:9-12).

2. Church Age doctrine is the wisdom of God, which stands in contrast to the demonic wisdom of the rulers of this age (1st Cor. 2:6b).
   a. οἱ ἄρχοντες τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου. ἄρχων #758: ruler, commander, chief, leader. Clearly fallen angelic references in many cases (Matt. 12:24 = Mk. 3:22 = Lk. 11:15; Jn. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Acts 4:26; Eph. 2:2). Also examine αἱ ἀρχαί from ἀρχή #746 (Rom. 8:38; 1st Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16; 2:10,15).
   b. The earthly, natural, & demonic wisdom of this age produces jealousy, selfish ambition, disorder, and every variation of evil (Jms. 3:15).

3. The Church is the entrusted steward of God’s mystery doctrine, and a special expression of God’s eternal glory in Christ (1st Cor. 2:7).
   a. Through the mystery doctrine revealed in the New Testament, the Church has the greatest understanding of the eternal purpose of God for the maximum glorification of the Lord Jesus Christ.
   b. The pre-eminence of Christ is the ultimate plan of God the Father (Col. 1:15-20; Eph. 1:10,11; 3:4-12).

4. Through their ignorance of God’s mystery doctrine, Satan’s forces accomplished His very purpose by crucifying the Lord Jesus Christ (1st Cor. 2:8; Rev. 13:8b).
   a. Jesus Christ was delivered up by the predetermined plan of God (Acts 2:23).
   b. The fallen angels own activity rendered them disarmed (Col. 2:15).
Spiritual Life

1. The spiritual life of a believer in the Dispensation of the Church is entirely centered upon the Spiritual revelation of God’s hidden wisdom in a mystery—New Testament Truth for the edification of the Church (1st Cor. 2:10).
   a. An important work of God the Holy Spirit in the Dispensation of the Church: Age of the Apostles was to reveal “all that God has prepared” for the saints of this Dispensation (1st Cor. 2:10a).
   b. Believers in the Church are blessed with the greatest capacity to love God than any other believers in any previous dispensation, because members of the Church have the greatest capacity to know God than any other believers in any previous dispensation (1st Cor. 2:9; 1st Jn. 4:7-21).
   c. New Testament Truth has equipped the Church with the deep things of God (1st Cor. 2:10b; Rom. 11:33), and prepared the Church to combat the deep things of Satan (Rev. 2:24).

2. The Spiritual revelation of God’s hidden wisdom in a mystery (the New Testament) is complemented by the Spiritual impartation every Member of the Church receives (1st Cor. 2:12).
   a. The Church is the recipient of the promised Holy Spirit from God—the Spirit of Truth (1st Cor. 2:12).
      1) Christ promised this blessing to His Apostles (Jn. 7:39; 14:16,17,26; 15:26; 16:7).
      2) He is the Spirit of Truth (Jn. 14:17; 15:26; 1st Jn. 4:2,6).
      3) He is the Spirit of Adoption (Rom. 8:15).
      4) He is the Spirit of Power and Love and Sound Judgment (2nd Tim. 1:7).
   b. The Holy Spirit is our Defender against the evil spiritual powers of this world.
      1) Unclean spirits (Mt. 10:1 & often).
      3) Spirits of slavery (Rom. 8:15).
      4) Spirits of stupor (Rom. 11:8).
      5) The spirit of the κόσμος (1st Cor. 2:12).
      6) The spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience (Eph. 2:2).
      7) The spirit of cowardice (2nd Tim. 1:7).
      8) The spirit of antichrist (1st Jn. 4:3).
      9) The spirit of error (1st Jn. 4:6).
   c. The indwelling of God the Holy Spirit is what makes each individual Member of the Body (the Church) a temple of God (1st Cor. 3:16; 6:19).

3. The indwelling of God the Holy Spirit is a particular blessing to the Church for the purpose of our spiritual perception of God’s Word (1st Cor. 2:12b).
   a. “So that” is a purpose clause which indicates the Father’s purpose in giving us the Holy Spirit.
   b. “We may know” is the subjunctive mood of οἶδα which indicates the potential we have of knowing.
   c. The Holy Spirit is active in both the transmission (through the spiritual gift of the communicator) and the reception (with the human spirit of the listener) of the Word of God as it is verbally taught (1st Cor. 2:13).
   d. The natural man (ψυχικός ὁθορστος) is the unbeliever without any spiritual capacity to accept or understand the revealed Word of God.
   e. The Word of God is spiritually examined (πνευματικός ὁθορστος).
   f. The spiritual man (πνευματικός [ὁθορστος]) is the believer with the spiritual capacity to accept & understand the revealed Word of God.