

The Conflict of Two Wisdoms – 1 Corinthians 1:1-4:5 – Outline

BACKGROUND

Greeting

A. The Author – The Will of God

Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

B. The Audience – The Sanctification of God

Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

C. The Address – The Blessing of God

Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Richness of Knowledge in Corinth

A. Appreciation for God's Grace in the Assembly

I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;

B. Acknowledgment of the Gift in the Assembly

That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: So that ye come behind in no gift;

C. Awaiting the Glory with the Assembly

1. The Coming

waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

2. The Confidence

Who shall also confirm you unto the end,

1'. The Coming

that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2'. The Confidence

God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Need for Christ-Centered Unity in Corinth

A. Paul's Desire for Unity

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

B. Paul's Addressing of Denominationalism

Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had

baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

THE WISDOM OF GOD: DOCTRINALLY EXPRESSED

Christ the Wisdom of God

A. True Wisdom; True Power

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

B. The Promise of the Destruction of Man's Wisdom

For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

C. God's Display of Wisdom: Salvation Through Preaching

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

B'. The Fulfillment of the Destruction of Man's Wisdom

For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

A'. True Wisdom; True Power

But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Glorying in the Lord

A. The Evidence of Man's Folly

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

B. The Display of Divine Wisdom in Apparent Foolishness

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

C. The Purpose of Displaying Divine Wisdom

That no flesh should glory in his presence.

D. The All-Sufficiency of Christ for the Believer

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

E. The Preeminence of Christ for the Believer

That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

The Power of God in His Wisdom

A. Paul's Discarding of Human Wisdom

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

B. Paul's Sole Embrace of the Message of Christ

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

C. Paul's Reliance on the Power of the Spirit

And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

D. Paul's Desire for Faith in the Power of God

That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

The Blindness of the World

A. The Ignorance of the Princes of this World

Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

B. God's Glorious Preparations for His Servants

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

A'. The Ignorance of the Princes of this World

Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

B'. God's Glorious Preparations for His Servants

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.

The Light of Spiritual Teaching

A. The Spirit: He Reveals to Us God's Mysteries

But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit:

B. The Spirit: He Alone Can Reveal the Deep Things of God

for 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.

C. The Spirit: Not Like the Spirit of the World

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

D. The Spirit: The Great Teacher of Spiritual Things

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

E. The Spirit: Natural Man Cannot Receive Him or His Teachings

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

F. The Spirit: He Prompts Discernment in His Believers

But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

G. The Spirit: He Grants Us the Mind of Christ

For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

THE WISDOM OF GOD: PRACTICALLY HANDLED

Carnality Expressed in Following Men

A. The Result of Carnality: Inability to Receive Solid Spiritual Food

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

B. The Ruin of Carnality: Envy, Strife, and Divisions Erupt

For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

C. The Root of Carnality: Exaltation of Man

For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

D. The Remedy of Carnality: Exaltation of God

I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

Metaphors of God's Assembly

A. The Assembly: God's Tilled Field

Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry,...

B. The Assembly: God's Building

... ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon.

Rewards for Labour

A. The Call to Carefulness

But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

B. The Trial of One's Work

Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

C. The Possibilities of One's Work: Gain or Loss

If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

The Assembly: God's Holy Temple

A. The Identity of the Assembly

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God,

B. The Mark of the Assembly

and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

C. The Holiness of the Assembly

If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

Becoming Fools to Be Wise

A. Discarding the World's Wisdom

Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

B. Assessing the World's Wisdom

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

C. Embracing God's Wisdom: Not Glorifying in Man, But in Christ

Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

Conclusion: Faithful Stewards of God's Mysteries

A. The Identity of Stewards

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

B. The Obligation of Stewards

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.