

## 1 CORINTHIANS: MOVING FROM THE CARNAL TO THE SPIRITUAL STATE

### **Part V: Living Protected From Carnal Divisions By Relying On The Holy Spirit's Power And Wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:6-16)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. Functioning by means of the sin nature, what we term "carnality," is often a challenge in today's churches.
- B. 1 Corinthians was written to carnal believers (1 Corinthians 3:1-3), and 1 Corinthians 2:6-16 shows how the believer can live protected from carnal divisions as he functions in the Holy Spirit's power and wisdom.
- C. We thus view this passage to discern the path to a life that lives protected from divisions caused by carnality:

#### **II. Living Protected From Carnal Divisions By Relying On The Holy Spirit's Power And Wisdom.**

- A. We before learned that Paul's readers faced divisions in their midst since they exalted worldly wisdom (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to 1 Cor. 1:18-25), so as we learned in our last lesson, Paul countered their exaltation of worldly wisdom by extolling God's wisdom over man's wisdom in 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5.
- B. That wisdom of God was a wonderful wisdom that led the believer who tapped into it to live protected from harm and spiritual defeat as the believer relied on the Holy Spirit's power and wisdom, 1 Corinthians 2:6-16:
  - 1. Paul explained that among mature (*teleios*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 816-817) believers (1 Cor. 2:6a ESV), the apostles imparted wisdom, but not the wisdom of the current worldly era or of its rulers who were doomed to pass away in divine judgment, 1 Corinthians 2:6b.
  - 2. Rather, Paul held that the apostles imparted a wisdom that was secret and hidden to the world, a wisdom of God that He decreed before the ages of human history for our glory in the Church era, 1 Corinthians 2:7.
  - 3. This divine wisdom was never understood by the rulers of the world, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2:8). Like Isaiah 64:6 taught, and Paul cited it freely (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to 1 Cor. 2:9), no earthly human eye has seen nor ear heard nor has the heart of man imagined what God has prepared for those who love him, 1 Corinthians 2:9.
  - 4. These wonderful truths, hidden even to the lost world's rulers, has been revealed to us believers through the Holy Spirit Who searches all things, even the hidden depths of God, 1 Corinthians 2:10.
  - 5. To explain this deep-searching ministry of the Spirit, Paul noted that just as no one but that person's spirit knows his thoughts, so no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 2:11.
  - 6. We believers have received the Holy Spirit from God, not the spirit of this world, so we can understand the spiritual truths freely given to us by God (1 Cor. 2:12), and the apostles imparted these truths, interpreting spiritual truths to "spiritual men," 1 Cor. 2:13. [The last word "spiritual" in verse 13 KJV, *pneumatikois*, is masculine in gender (versus the neuter gender which is spelled the same way here), meaning "spiritual men," for verse 13 parallels verse 6 where Paul wrote of the mature, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 510.]
  - 7. However, the "natural man," or *psuchikos*, who lives and thinks only on the natural plane (Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 902) -- **what is true of both the unbeliever who does not have the Holy Spirit and also of the carnal believer who does not function by means of the Holy Spirit** (cf. 1 Cor. 3:4; Gal. 5:16-23) -- the natural man does not receive the things of God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to him, and he is unable to understand them because they are spiritually "discerned" (*anakrino*, Ibid., p. 56), 1 Corinthians 2:14.
  - 8. In contrast, the spiritual believer who relies on the indwelling Holy Spirit "discerns" (*anakrino* again, Ibid.) all things, yet he himself is "discerned" (*anakrino* once again, Ibid.) by no one, 1 Corinthians 2:15.
  - 9. This is so because no one has understood the mind of the Lord to be able to instruct Him, but we believers have the mind of Christ, and understand that divine Mind when we rely on the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. 2:16.
  - 10. Thus, if a believer who relies on the Holy Spirit discerns all things, he discerns the carnal mind even if a great person in this world's estimation has that carnal mind (v. 6b), and yet the godly one himself is not able to be rightly discerned by any carnal party, so the godly is able to live separate from the destructive mind of carnality and avoid the pain of being subjected to the hurtful effects of carnal church divisions!

***Lesson:*** *Though the carnal believer functions like the unsaved in relying on the worldly wisdom that leads to carnal divisions in the body of Christ, the spiritual Christian, understanding the mind of God that discerns the sin of the carnal, is able to discern the carnality he sees in the divisions he witnesses around him so as to live separate from the damaging values and thinking of carnality and thus be protected from the carnal divisions themselves.*

***Application:*** (1) *May we rely on the Holy Spirit of God to discern God's truths as well as carnal error for blessing!*  
(2) *May we CONTINUE to rely on the Holy Spirit of God as a WAY of LIFE to AVOID needless sin and hurt!*