



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



# The First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians

## Chapter 2

Bishop Youssef



# Introduction

- St. Paul affirms that he does not depend upon persuasive words of wisdom, but on the demonstration of the Spirit and power (1-4)
- Their faith should rest in God's power, not in the wisdom of men (5)
- He proclaims wisdom coming from God (6-9)
- God revealed this wisdom by His Spirit (10-13)
- Then he explains the difference between the "natural man" and the "spiritual man" (14-16)



# Christ Crucified (2:1-5)

- St. Paul has shown that God chose the things and persons which the world calls foolish in order to confute the world's wisdom
- He now shows that this what he used at Corinth in the founding of the church
- Excellence of speech or of wisdom: things highly esteemed at Corinth and among all the Greeks
- The testimony of God: Mystery of God (Eph 3:9) (1 Tim 3:16)



# Christ Crucified (2:1-5)

- All his preaching centered upon the crucified Christ
- In this great center of Greek culture, he felt a human apprehension at first in presenting the simple gospel in the face of the Greek philosophy
- He did not resort to the arts and enticements of Greek oratory or philosophy
- Filled by the Holy Spirit, he spoke in power



# Christ Crucified (2:1-5)

- His words were also supported by the power of the Spirit shown in miracles (Rom 15:19) (2 Cor 12:12)
- Their faith was not produced by the triumphs of philosophy,
- But by the gospel preached in the power of the Spirit
- Hence it was wrought through the means supplied by God



# Spiritual Wisdom (2:6-16)

- The gospel has a divine wisdom of its own, which is recognized by those who have become full-grown Christians
- Babes must be fed on milk, but the mature can endure strong meat (1 Cor 3:2)
- For the mature there is a depth of wisdom revealed in the gospel, but not the wisdom of this world
- Rulers: Leading men of the Jews, Greeks and Romans
- They had not learned this divine wisdom



# Spiritual Wisdom (2:6-16)

- But we speak the mysterious wisdom of God, which was hidden for many ages from all the world, and is still hidden even from babes in Christ; much more from all unbelievers
- So far is this wisdom from coming to nothing, like worldly wisdom
- For our glory: Arising from the glory of our Lord, and then to be revealed when all worldly glory vanishes



# Spiritual Wisdom (2:6-16)

- The strongest proof of the natural man's need of heavenly wisdom is that they were utterly ignorant of the divine wisdom to be revealed in Christ
- They, the high priests, with Pilate and Herod, crucified the Son.
- As it is written (Isa 54:4)
- There was no human understanding of the glory to be revealed in the mystery of the gospel



# Spiritual Wisdom (2:6-16)

- No natural man has either seen, heard, or known, the things which God has prepared for them who love Him
- These wonders were revealed by the Spirit to the apostles (to us), and made known through them to mature Christians (1 Cor 2:6)
- The Holy Spirit, who was given to the apostles to lead them into all truth, is the Spirit of God



# Spiritual Wisdom (2:6-16)

- So, this Spirit teaches a knowledge of the deep things of God
- The secrets of the divine wisdom are thus made known
- A man's spirit knows all his secrets, though these are unknown to another man
- So God's Spirit knows the Divine secrets, and imparts these wherever He dwells in full measure as the Spirit of Knowledge



# Spiritual Wisdom (2:6-16)

- The Spirit received by all the apostles was not the spirit of the world, but the Holy Spirit which Christ promised them as a guide into all truth
- Hence they were enabled to know what God given freely to them
- The truths, the hidden wisdom (1 Cor 2:7), the mystery of God (Col 2:2), revealed to them through the Spirit, they spoke to others



# Spiritual Wisdom (2:6-16)

- These things they spoke not in human philosophy but in the words given by the Holy Spirit
- That spiritual things are only suited to spiritual persons
- Spirituals of the Old and New Testaments can only be understood by mutual comparison or combination, not by combination with worldly "wisdom," or natural perceptions



# Spiritual Wisdom (2:6-16)

- The natural man is the one who has the spirit of the world; one not baptized and confirmed
- The natural man does not understand or conceive the things revealed by the Spirit of God, whether relating to His nature or His kingdom
- These are foolishness to one not under the dominion of the Holy Spirit, such as the Jewish scribes and Greek disputers (1 Cor 1:20)



# Spiritual Wisdom (2:6-16)

- For they can be discerned by the aid of that Spirit, and by those spiritual senses, which he has not
- Spiritual man is he who lives the spiritual life
- The spiritual man, helped by the indwelling Spirit, is prepared to study the deeper truths of the Spirit
- Yet he himself is discerned by no men (natural), they neither understand who he is, nor what he says



# Spiritual Wisdom (2:6-16)

- In order to judge the spiritual man, the ordinary man must "know the mind of the Lord."
- But who of natural men knows that so as to be able to instruct Him as His counselor (Isa 40:13,14)
- Natural men who judge spiritual men, living according to the mind of Christ are virtually wishing to instruct God, and bring Him to another mind, as counselors instruct their king



# Conclusion

- What did St. Paul use to preach and declare the testimony of God?
- What did he avoid to use to preach the testimony of God?
- Why he would make sure to use the Holy Spirit wisdom and not his natural wisdom?
- With what word did St. Paul describe the wisdom of God?
- How was it revealed and to whom?
- What was the consequence of those who did not love Him and not received the Holy Spirit at that age?
- Why is it better to be spiritual and not natural?