

MSB - 9/5/60
MCC - 9/25/60

If That Is Spiritual 1 Corinthians 3

Intro: The Corinthian church was plagued with problems, problems of every kind. Almost anything that could be wrong with any church was wrong with this church. And Paul writes in an attempt to correct their difficulties.

One big part of their problem was that they were in Corinth, Corinth with its worldly wisdom had had a devastating effect upon the people of God. WISDOM was the desire of everyone's heart, and they were out to get all of the wisdom wherever and however they could.

Paul tries to show that there are two kinds of wisdom.

(1) There is the wisdom of this world (v. 20), and (2) There is the wisdom of God (v. 24). And the two are so far apart that they can hardly be compared. But

There is this vital difference:
THE WISDOM OF GOD CAN ONLY BE KNOWN
BY THE REVELATION OF THAT TRUTH BY THE
HOLY SPIRIT AND IN NO OTHER WAY.

And when the child of York, or a
church, substitutes any other teaching
for that of the Holy Spirit, he or they
are in for trouble. "Our greatest
problem is to remain spiritual"
(Dr. J. G. Back).

But who can be classified as a
spiritual man? Who does Paul
have in mind when he ~~says~~,
"He that is spiritual"? Well, let
us look for our answer right
here!

I. The spiritual man.

A He is one who possesses, or
who is indwelt by, the Holy
Spirit. This is the primary
requirement. But who has
the Holy Spirit? Every Christian
has nature and the sometime.
Cf. v. 12; 3:16; 6:20. Nobody but
a person who has been born
again ^{can} become spiritual in
the N.T. sense.

But let me hasten to add that
not every Christian is spiritual.
See 3:1. So there must be something

else that is needed. What is it?

- B. He must be one who depends upon the Holy Spirit for His understanding of what Paul calls the things of God, or which we might also call, the WORD OF GOD.

Cf. v. 9-12. To me this is the whole point of the passage. A SPIRITUALLY CHRISTIAN IS A SPIRIT-TAUGHT CHRISTIAN. And this is the primary reason the Spirit of God has come to dwell in your heart. Cf. again John 14:26; 15:26; 16:11-15. He is limited to the extent that we allow Him to teach us the Word.

Now there is so much that can be said about this, but I want to pass on to the practical results of such a relationship with the Holy Spirit.

- III. What are the evidences that a person is being Spirit-taught, or is spiritual?

- A. V. 15. He immediately becomes independent of human wisdom. The Spirit-taught man discerns the rightness & wrongness of

things, yet he himself refuses.
He refuses to be limited by the
standards of mere human wisdom.
He is not nearly as concerned
about what man says as he is
about what God says.

Cf. Psal. 119:99 - "I have more understanding than all my teachers; for their testimonies are my meditation".
Also 1 John 2:27, "But the anointing".

John is not minimizing the teaching ministry of men of God,
or he wouldn't have written his book,
but he is saying you are
not dependent upon men as men!

- B. A Spirit-taught Christian
given the supreme place in
his knowledge & in his life to
the Lord Jesus. Cf. v. 2 How
ignorant this sounded to men
who knew nothing more than
human wisdom.
- C. A Spirit-taught Christian
will be bold in his witness
(v. 3, 4; acts 4:31; 6:10).
- D. A Spirit-taught Christian will
be gracious in his relations
with his fellow-believers
(Gal. 6:1; acts 4:33; & the whole
purpose behind 1 Cor.)

E. A holy life (Gal. 5:16, 22, 23; Romans 8:2).

F. Life and peace (Rom. 8:2).

Conclusion: You can't find these things in the Corinthian church. Can you see them in your own life?

It affects our attitude toward the Word, toward the Lord Jesus, toward other people, toward sin, and toward ourselves. (Psa. 103:14).

Oh, that we would let the Spirit of God make us keep us spiritual, by learning the Word.