

The Interpreter – Part I **(Lift: Carried by the Wind of the Spirit – Part III)**

5/10/2009

The notes that follow each question below come from discussions that occurred after the sermon or further consideration of some of the issues raised. They should not be considered the “correct” answers by any means. It is hoped that they will provide a starting point for developing your own discussion of Pastor Steve’s sermons.

1. The focus for today is on using the Holy Spirit to help us understand the Bible better. What were the two opening points that Pastor Steve made relative to the Bible?

- A. The Bible is the most relevant book alive. It is not trendy nor can it be read like a newspaper. But it speaks to a messed up world, saying we need to do more than just tweak a few things. We need to change the system we have and step into another stream. We need to let the Word of God shape our assumptions about life.
- B. We can understand the Bible. God will reveal His wisdom to those who seek it. The Bible was written in the common dialects, but it brings with it great power. (see 2 Peter 1:3-4 and Ephesians 1:18-23). This understanding begins with a desire to follow Christ.

2. To get some background, read 1 Cor. 1:18-29 to see why the Holy Spirit might be of assistance.

One doesn’t have to be a learned Bible scholar to receive blessings from reading God’s Word. In fact, it was the most well educated leaders who rejected Jesus during His ministry. They tried to dictate the terms by which Jesus would prove Himself to be the Son of God instead of opening their hearts and minds to what He was doing in accordance with the Father’s will. The Holy Spirit will reveal to us what God wants us to understand if we will only have faith. (v. 24)

3. Now read the first part of the passage for today: 1 Cor. 2: 1 – 5. Why is Paul being so explicit in describing his humility?

He was a Pharisee, so he was among the most educated Jews, but his focus was on making sure people heard the gospel message, so he made sure that eloquent language was not a barrier to them. He let the Holy Spirit speak through him.

4. Pastor Steve described two kinds of wisdom. See 1 Cor. 2:6-7 and describe them both.

- a) (v. 6) – **discovered** wisdom – this knowledge and insight comes from things going on in front of us. This is the accumulated wisdom of our age. It clearly seems to be relevant to today’s issues and takes advantage of our good communication systems to propagate.

b) (v. 7) – **revealed** wisdom – this knowledge and insight does not come from this age, but rather existed before time began. It is whispered to you by God. No eye can see, no ear can hear the revealed truth of God.

While revealed truth should be our objective, sometimes God allows us to discover who He is and what HE wants us to know. There are those who get it (v. 12-13) and those who don't get it (v. 14)

5. Read the third part of the passage (1 Cor. 2:8-16) and describe what it is that makes believers different.

Because Christians possess the Holy Spirit, we are able to discern and sense God's message to us. To a nonbeliever, this all seems as foolishness – how could God possibly take up residence in humans?!! However, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we can have the "mind of Christ" . . . we can actually think like Jesus thought (see Philippians 2:5-11).

6. Pastor Steve described three ways in which we can open ourselves up so that the Holy Spirit can pass along God's message to us as we read the Bible. What are they and how are they different from each other?

- A. Shift from surprise to **posture (anticipation)**. If we read the Bible and a verse just jumps off the page at us, we are pleasantly surprised. However, if even before we pick up the Bible we acknowledge that God will speak to us through the Holy Spirit and the words we read, then there is not a surprise when this happens.
- B. We need to shift from reading to **listening**. Instead of plodding through the Bible in an attempt to read it like a book, we need to listen more than we talk. We need to put ourselves into the place of the characters in the Bible. God may only say something once (or give us a single opportunity to witness to a particular individual), but He will give us more opportunities if we will listen and hear God's prompting. This takes time and focus, which are in limited supply and lots of discipline.
- C. We need to shift from studying the Bible to **obeying** the Bible. We need to focus less on knowing everything about the Bible and more on doing (hearers vs. doers). We should study the Bible as much as we can, but ultimately, we need to study and obey. Because you obey, then you seek to understand. This changes us from hearers of God's Word to doers of God's will.

Note that these are all interrelated. A commitment to obedience puts us in the proper posture and opens us to hearing the revelation of the Holy Spirit.

7. See if it makes sense to summarize all of the above as putting ourselves in a position for:

- a) discovery of the Truth
- b) revelation of Meaning
- c) application to Living

Discovery and revelation go hand in hand. As we devote time to Bible study in conjunction with purposeful listening for the Holy Spirit, we will receive revelations that will be applicable to our lives. We must put ourselves in a position for all of these to happen. This may mean establishing a special place for our devotions, where we expect the Holy Spirit to speak to us and then take the time to let it happen.