

Spending Time with Jesus in I Corinthians Chapters 2 & 3

Invite Jesus to speak to you as you read this week.

1st: read I or II Corinthians all the way through, the whole book, imagining you are Paul saying this to the church in Corinth. To help you remember and ENJOY what you are reading, read out loud for at least 15 minutes each time (longer would be even better.)

2nd: read chapters 2 and 3 by themselves to remember what they are about.

3rd: read chapters 2 and 3 again and write down what stands out to you.

What do you notice?

1)

2)

3)

Third read through, answer questions as you go:

I Corinthians 2:1-5

This starts with, “And so it was with me, brothers and sisters.” Look back at the last paragraph of chapter one. When Paul says, “And so it was with me,” what is he referring to? Is he one of the foolish, weak, lowly, despised things God chose to use? OR is he someone who only boasts in the Lord? OR both?

When he told the Corinthians about God, how did Paul keep himself from using eloquence & human wisdom? (hint: v. 2)

Did he do this by accident or on purpose? _____ What word in verse 2 is a hint? _____

Why didn't Paul make his preaching more impressive with wise and persuasive words? (vv. 4-5)

Why does Paul not want their faith to rest on human wisdom?

I Corinthians 2:6-16

Mind blown, right! Look back at what Paul is saying about God's wisdom. Underline the things that amaze you:

- a. Paul only speaks it among the _____
- b. It's not the wisdom of this age or of the _____ of this age (who are coming to _____)
- c. It's a _____ that has been _____
- d. God destined it for **our** _____ before _____
- e. _____ of the _____ of this _____ understood it (if they had, they would not have _____ the _____ of _____.)

If the rulers of this age had understood it, why would they not have crucified the Lord of glory?

"Lord of glory"...what a title for Jesus! Why does Paul call Jesus by that title here?

Buckle up! In verses 9-12 he tells us how God's mysterious wisdom is given to us mere humans.

- a. By his Spirit, God reveals things SO incredible to us that...
 - 1. No _____ has seen them
 - 2. No _____ has _____ them
 - 3. No _____ as conceived (imagined/thought up) them
 - 4. They are things God himself has _____ for those who _____ him.
 - 5. Only the Spirit, who searches even the _____ things of God, knows them.
- b. We can only understand these things (that God has prepared for us) BECAUSE we have received the _____ of God...

SO THAT we may _____ what God has _____ us!!!

In verse 13 Paul says that he learned this because he was taught directly by the Spirit

AND (to those who have the Spirit) Paul explains _____ realities with _____ -
_____ words!

Pause and let ALL THAT sink in...

So the Spirit, who searches God's innermost thoughts, makes it possible for us to understand what God has done and prepared for those who love him. What an amazing partnership...that we don't deserve! Paul explains it this way at the end of the chapter: "But we have the _____ of _____."

(That sound you just heard is my mind exploding, my heart rejoicing, and my knees hitting the ground. I can't wrap my mind around this, but oh, I want to experience this intimacy with our Savior!)

I Corinthians 3:1-9

How do you think the Corinthian church felt when Paul compared them to babies?

Why does Paul think it is immature for them to make boasts like "I follow Paul" or "I follow Apollos"? What problems is this causing?

Why do you think Paul wants them, the church, to be more than "mere human beings"? What could they be instead? (Hint - 2:15)

Paul tells them exactly how important he and Apollos are. In verse 5 he says they are only _____. In verse 9, he says they are _____ - _____ in God's _____. Why is he pointing this out?

Do you think Paul and Apollos themselves are united or are they trying to outshine each other?

Think about the videos we've watched. Do you think the Corinthians would follow someone's *servant*, or would that be insulting to them? _____. Then why does Paul keep bringing it up?

What seed did Paul plant and Apollos water? (Hint: in verse 9 he says that the Corinthians are God's field. What did Paul plant in their lives?)

I Corinthians 3:10-22

At the end of verse 9, Paul switches word pictures: now he is thinking of the Corinthians as a building. Why does Paul describe himself as the one who got to lay the foundation of the Corinthian church?

Who is that foundation?

Is Paul speaking of church buildings? If not, what is he talking about?

Building up the church is a theme we'll hear over and over from Paul this year. Here he says that someone could build the church up with gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw. These are **symbols**. What could a preacher who came after Paul do to build up the Corinthian church that would be like gold? _____

Like straw? _____

The "Day" refers to the Day of the Lord, when Jesus comes again and everything hidden will be brought to light. Why is it important to remember that a Day is coming when everyone's work to build up the church will be shown for what it is?

Verse 16 reminds them of an astounding new reality. Jerusalem has the one Jewish temple (with all Herod's "improvements"), but God's Spirit never filled it. At Pentecost, God showed where His Spirit dwells. His temple is no longer a place...a "what" or "where"; His temple is a "who". Who are God's temple? _____

Look back at I Corinthians 1:2. The "you" Paul is writing to is...

...the church of God in Corinth, to those _____ in _____ and called to be his _____, together with all those _____ who _____ on the _____ of _____ Jesus Christ, their _____ and _____.

Does this include us today? _____

Who dwells in the midst of this temple? _____ WHOA!!!

How are we God's temple? (end of verse 17) ...and you _____ are that temple. Why does Paul add "together"?

In v. 18, those who think they are wise should become "fools". What does "become 'fools'" mean?