

Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 2:12 – 3:11

New American Standard Version

1 ¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the
2 Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things
3 freely given to us by God, ¹³ which things we also speak, not
4 in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by
5 the Spirit, combining spiritual *thoughts* with spiritual *words*.
6 ¹⁴ But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit
7 of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot
8 understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.
9 ¹⁵ But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself
10 is appraised by no one. ¹⁶ For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND
11 OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have
12 the mind of Christ. ^{3:1} And I, brethren, could not speak to
13 you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants
14 in Christ. ² I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for
15 you were not yet able *to receive it*. Indeed, even now you
16 are not yet able, ³ for you are still fleshly. For since there is
17 jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are
18 you not walking like mere men? ⁴ For when one says, "I am
19 of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not *mere*
20 men? ⁵ What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants
21 through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave
22 *opportunity* to each one. ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but
23 God was causing the growth. ⁷ So then neither the one who
24 plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who
25 causes the growth. ⁸ Now he who plants and he who waters
26 are one; but each will receive his own reward according to
27 his own labor. ⁹ For we are God's fellow workers; you are
28 God's field, God's building. ¹⁰ According to the grace of
29 God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I
30 laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each
31 man must be careful how he builds on it. ¹¹ For no man can
32 lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is
33 Jesus Christ.

*Use the suggestions on the back page as a starting point for your own **Observation, Interpretation, and Application.***

Observation (What does it say?):

Paul is clearly encouraging dependence on God's Spirit (l. 2). Underline all the things he contrasts with true Spirituality.

Circle the physical images he uses.

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What specific, observable symptoms does Paul describe related to the problem? What is the evidence of the lack of Spirituality in this church?

What does he suggest is the underlying cause of the problem?

Why does he change his imagery in l. 28? What is the difference between a field and a building? What new direction might Paul have in mind with this change?

Application (What does it mean for me?):

How do you evaluate where you fit into Paul's descriptions – natural man, spiritual man, man of flesh, infant in Christ? Are there other categories he doesn't include that might fit you better?

What might God want to do to move you into the "spiritual man" category?

Inductive Bible Study

(A few general ideas)

Observation

(What does it say?)

What facts do you **observe** about the passage (repetition, comparisons, contrasts, cause and effect, unusual words, etc.)? Mark the passage (underline, circles, etc.) to help bring out the writer's thought process.

- Who are the people involved?
- What is the action taking place?
- What type of literature is the passage (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are there any unusual words used?
- Is there any symbolic or figurative language used?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Is there any repetition of words or ideas?
- Are there comparisons or contrasts?
- Are there indications of cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose (“in order that...”)?
- Are there conclusions (“Therefore...”)?
- Does the passage contain any explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?
- What would be a good “headline” for the passage?

Interpretation

(What does it mean?)

What questions come to mind about the facts of the passage that would help you **interpret** the writer's meaning?

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer's thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

Application

(What does it mean for me?)

How does the writer's meaning relate to your life? What specific application might the Holy Spirit want to show you?

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

Read nothing into the Scriptures, but draw everything from them, and suffer nothing to remain hidden that is really in them. – J.A. Bengel