

# Paul copes with rejection

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 dom among them that are perfect. The word translated "perfect" is literally "perfect ones." It does not mean sinless or morally perfect. Rather, it denotes those who are spiritually mature in Christ. These are the genuine believers who have been saved by Christ's shed blood for their sins. The very fact that some of the Corinthians were enamored of worldly wisdom and at odds with each other (3:1-4) indicated their lack of spiritual depth and maturity. Only the mature can appreciate fully how wise God's message is (see Ephesians 4:13, 14).

Second, the wisdom that Paul speaks is not the wisdom of this world or of its princes - the world and its leaders eventually will come to nothing, all earthly powers will pass away. But Paul speaks with a type of wisdom that does not originate within the world and is not recognized by the world and that is the Wisdom of God.  
 Paul rejects human wisdom so that he may proclaim the wisdom of God. God has given this hidden wisdom a kind of mystery (v. 7). Paul's message from God is not a mystery because it is complicated or difficult to understand, but because it was kept secret until God was ready to reveal it - the plan of salvation.

4. In what way were the princes of this world ignorant of "The Lord of glory" (v. 9)?  
 When the Jews and the

Roman governor united in effecting the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, neither party to the proceeding can be said to have understood and realized what was being done. The enemies and murderers of the Prophet of Nazareth saw neither the glory of his character and person more than very dimly, nor the glory of his redemption in any measure at all. Jesus himself had declared, "They know not what they do," and Paul here says that, had they known the counsels of God, they would not have crucified Christ. This does not justify or excuse their act, for they certainly knew that they were putting to a cruel death One who was innocent and just Christ is the Lord of glory - The Pulpit Commentary (H. D. M. Spence-Jones, Ed.)

5. In the context of Paul's discussion, what was he emphasizing in verse 9?

While 1 Corinthians 2:9 is often used in reference to heaven, the context suggests that Paul was referring to the mystery of God's plan. In its original setting, the quote from Isaiah declares that no God but the Lord acts on behalf of His people (64:4). Paul's point in quoting this passage was to show that God's wise plan could not be grasped by human means. It is revealed to believers only by God's Spirit. No wonder the Greeks considered the Cross foolishness and it was a stumbling block to the Jews! Yet this was God's revealed wisdom to save the world.

"The great truths of the gospel are things lying out of the sphere of human discovery. Lying out of the sphere of nature, we cannot discover them but by the light of revelation. (Matthew Henry's Commentary, Zondervan).

6. How should we interpret Paul's statement about "comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (vs. 13)?

The phrase "comparing spiritual things with spiritual" is difficult to interpret. Since the Greek simply reads "comparing spiritual with spiritual," the meaning is obscure. Some think it means comparing spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. Others believe that it means explaining spiritual things to spiritual men. The word translated "comparing" can also be rendered "interpreting," "combining," or "expressing." Matthew Henry's Commentary says, "Spiritual truths, when brought together, will help to illustrate one another."

The Pulpit Commentary summarized says "When the human spirit receives the Divine Spirit, what a glorious enlargement of the things of God, to the domain of thought, emotion, impulse! Calmly the mind works on; its range and compass widened by a new horizon, a motive power brought to bear it never knew, and the repose of strength deepening evermore in the peace of Christ." This interpretation is supported by verses 10, 12, and is the most proper to convey Paul's meaning.

7. Who is the "natural man" (vs. 14)?

The "natural man" refers to the unconverted, who lack supernatural life and wisdom. He or she is the unbeliever who has not received the Holy Spirit. The unbeliever is walking in the flesh and not in the spirit. He or she is carnally minded and spiritually dead. If one is carnally minded he or she is at enmity against God, is not following the law of God and therefore, cannot please God.

# S.C. panel orders evolution study

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLUMBIA—The state Education Oversight Committee approved high school biology standards Monday that require students to "critically analyze aspects of evolutionary theory."

The wording of standards had caused an impasse between the committee and the state Board of Education.

Education Board members and state Education Superintendent Inez Tenenbaum worried the change would open the door to teaching alternative theories such as intelligent design.

Under the wording approved Monday, students would have to understand how scientists use data to critically analyze the theory.

"Scientific inquiry is taught at every grade level and in every discipline," Education Department spokesman Jim Foster said. "It

does not require students to study alternatives to evolution that are decidedly out of the mainstream."

Monday's unanimous vote to approve the standards without more controversial wording came with almost no discussion and there was no mention of evolution.

"I cannot see this as anything other than a victory," said Casey Luskin, a spokesman for Discovery Institute, a Seattle, Wash.-based think tank that encourages critical analysis of evolution. "Students will now learn the scientific strengths and weaknesses of evolution."

Both the Education Board and the oversight committee had to approve the biology standards before they could be adopted. The standards have to be approved every seven years, meaning the debate could begin again in 2010.

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 "I WAS DEAD"  
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Let's look at our text again in this study: "And you hath He quickened, who were dead..." Now, what does it mean to be dead? It is the opposite of being alive. To be dead spiritually means that you have no spiritual life in you. You do not possess the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is the believer's life. Therefore, you have no spiritual life. Let's look at a dead man for just a little while. When he was a boy of about 9 years of age, he made a profession of faith in Christ on this verse: "I believe I can trust the Lord 'til I die." The pastor and the deacons accepted him in the church (about 1954) as saved. He came on up in the religious world and as a young man, was said to be one of the most religious young men, a leader among the young folks. He read his Bible diligently, abstaining from all the gross sins that men wallow in. He became a junior deacon and Bible teacher. No other young man could match his Bible knowledge and love of being religious. Yes, this young man was religious to the core. But the older he became, and even though so religious, despite all his church duties, there was an emptiness in his heart. He would sit in church on Sunday morning. And the pastor would say: "While I pray, you pray, too." And that young man there would cry in his heart: "I'm trying to pray, but the heavens seem like brass to me!" And he wanted to tell the pastor and all the others there that his prayers were not getting through. He would leave the services and go back home groaning and so miserable. He would sit there in his room on Sunday afternoon reading his Bible. And much in the Book of Job and the epistles of Paul. He could see that the Lord was real to Job and Paul. But he knew the Lord was not real to his heart. He would cry out there in the quietness, in his study: "Oh! If I could have been saved like Job was saved! Or like Paul was saved!" That young man did not know it then, but every sinner is saved just like Paul was saved and just like Job was saved. My Heavenly Father never varies in how He saves a poor, lost, guilty sinner. Not knowing the gracious work (Jn. 16:7-11) of the Holy Spirit at that time, that young man did not know he was dead. He continued on in his religious duties, doing everything he could to fill the deep emptiness in his heart. He'd go back to church, hoping to get up to the high level of joy he missed all previous times. But each time, he'd leave the church more miserable. He would hear about a certain preacher at another church. His resolve would be: "I'll go hear him. Maybe he'll tell me what is wrong with me and why I can't get up to that high state of joy I feel I should." And just when the preacher would get up to where he thought for sure he'd tell him what was wrong, the preacher would go just like a dog backtracking a rabbit. And the young man would be so disappointed.

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