

December 16, 2012

THINGS FREELY GIVEN
I Corinthians 2:6-16

We will consider in this message those THINGS that God GIVES to the objects of His everlasting love. **They** are GIFTS. We will also consider HOW (upon what basis) these things are given. **They** are given FREELY.

Look at the verse I took my title from, I Corinthians 2: 12 “**Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.**”

We will consider three statements today concerning THINGS FREELY GIVEN from the context of I Corinthians 2. THINGS FREELY GIVEN are:

1. Things which are held (locked up) in a mystery.
2. Things which are Spiritually discerned.
3. Things which the natural man will NOT receive.

Our study will be from verses 6 to 16. **But**, first, let's go back to verse one and get the context.

Look at I Corinthians 2: 1- 2 “**And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.**

2 For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”

Paul is saying that he did not come with great oratory, nor with great debate in philosophy and human wisdom. **He came**, rather, declaring the simple truth of the Gospel, how God saves sinners through Christ ALONE.

Look at verses 3-5 “**And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.**

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”

“**Demonstration** of the Spirit IN POWER is man embracing the Gospel.

Our EMPHASIS today will be on two things: **First**, on the things that God has GIVEN to those sinners that He has loved from all eternity. **And**, second, on, HOW (upon what basis) those things are given. **We will** see that every sinner chosen in Christ has ALREADY been blessed in Christ with all spiritual blessings.

HOW are these blessings given? **They** are given FREELY. **They** are given UNCONDITIONALLY. **They** are given WITHOUT A CAUSE in those who receive them.

First, THINGS FREELY GIVEN are: Things which are held (locked up) in a MYSTERY.

Look at 1 Corinthians 2: 6-7 “**Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:**

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:”

The õthingsö that God has given to His elect people are a MYSTERY. Now, a MYSTERY is not something that cannot be known. **It is**, rather, something that must be REVEALED.

Consider a õmurderö mystery. **The** book is designed to hold its reader in suspense (to õkeep them guessingö about the plot and the outcome). **In the** end of the book the suspense will be ended. **The** mystery will be solved. **The** writer will reveal the villain. **It’s** only a mystery until then.

The õwisdom of Godö that is held in a MYSTERY; **the** õwisdom of Godö that (must be) REVEALED is the MYSTERY of Godø salvation. **This** MYSTERY includes the õthingsö that God has provided, as well as, HOW those õthingsö are FREELY given to the objects of His everlasting love.

Let’s look at the õthingsö God has provided. **These** õthingsö are summarized in Ephesians 1.

Look at Ephesians 1: 3 “**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:”**

The õthingsö are summarized by õall spiritual blessingsö. **And**, they are many.

Look at Ephesians 1: 4-5 “**According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:**

5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,”

A **multitude** of sinners was õchosen in Himö (in Christ) before the world began. **These** sinners are given an unchangeable standing of justification (õholy and without blameö). **They** are õadoptedö into the household and family of God. **In** time according to Galatians 4, we õreceive (that) adoptionö.

Look at Ephesians 1: 5-6 “**To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.**

7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;”

Those chosen are now (and FOREVER will be) õaccepted in the belovedö. **They** have õredemption through His bloodö. **They** have the õforgiveness of sinsö. **Every** sinner in Christ has ALREADY been õgivenö these things. **They** are ALREADY reconciled (at peace) with God through the obedience and death of Christ, their Substitute and Surety.

All the blessings and benefits of salvation are theirs. **And**, they are theirs without COST (to them). **They** are theirs without a CAUSE in them. **I.e.** They didn't do ANYTHING to get these benefits. **These** benefits are GIVEN. **And**, they are (given) FREELY. **Look** at another context of scripture that shows HOW these "things" God has provided are FREELY given.

Look at Romans 8: 31-32 **“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”**

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

The things FREELY given are (not) things that are FREE. **They** came at a COST. **They** came at the COST of the obedience, suffering, and DEATH of the Lord, Jesus Christ. **They** came because "God spared not His own Son". **They** came because God "delivered Christ up (to the cross)" to put away sin and bring in everlasting righteousness.

Christ EARNED these "things" that are "given". **They** are bought and paid for by the blood of Christ. **That** is the reason God can give them to sinners FREELY (unconditionally, without a cause IN THEM).

We are talking about the "wisdom of God" that is held in a MYSTERY. **We are** talking about GOD'S salvation, salvation by grace, (i.e. salvation conditioned ENTIRELY upon Christ WITHOUT (any) contribution from the sinner). **It is** the MYSTERY of Christ crucified. **That** is what the Apostle had already stated.

Look back at I Corinthians 2: 2 **“For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”**

The MYSTERY that must be REVEALED is the MYSTERY of what Christ has done to "save His people from their sins". **It is** the MYSTERY of what Christ has done to ACCOMPLISH the salvation (in FULL) of those He was given. **It is** the MYSTERY of the satisfaction to law and justice Christ has rendered. **It is** the MYSTERY of the righteousness He wrought out that makes it right for God to justify ungodly sinners.

Look back at 1 Corinthians 2: 6-7 **“Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:**

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:”

You notice that "the wisdom of God" (His salvation); that "wisdom" that is held in a MYSTERY, stands in contrast to the "wisdom of the world" and "the princes of this world", (which wisdom comes to nothing).

The "princes" are people of influence. **Those** of Christ's day did not know who He was or what He came to accomplish for His people. **Those** of our day don't either. **Everybody** is not shown the "wisdom of God" in salvation. **This** MYSTERY is not revealed to all. **To many**, (most "professing christians"), the "wisdom" of God's salvation remains a MYSTERY.

Look at 1 Corinthians 2: 8-9 “Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

God’s salvation is NOT the salvation any of us know by nature. **What** we all know by nature is a salvation of öworksö. **It is** a salvation conditioned on what öChristö has done PLUS what the sinner does to complete it.

The öbestö thing natural man has figured out in the matter of salvation is that Christ died for everyone, AND, that if YOU (the sinner) will just do YOUR part, YOU will be saved. **If you** don’t do YOUR part, you will perish. **Christ’s** death (itself) did not save you. **You** will only be saved IF (you) close the deal by _____.

But, although that is the widely accepted belief among öprofessing christainsö in EVERY generation, it stands in CONTRAST (opposition) to God’s salvation, which was EARNED by Christ and FREELY given to the objects of God’s love.

The FIRST thing we learn about THINGS FREELY GIVEN: They are öthingsö concerning God’s salvation. **They** are öthingsö held in a MYSTERY.

Second, THINGS FREELY GIVEN are: Things which are Spiritually discerned. They are a MYSTERY to all by nature. **But**, they are REVEALED to the objects of God’s everlasting love.

Look at I Corinthians 2: 10-11 **“But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.**

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

ONLY the innermost being (spirit) of man knows the things of the man. Explain! **ONLY** the Spirit of God öknowsö the things of God. **ONLY** the Spirit knows the öthingsö HIDDEN in the mind of God. **ONLY** the Spirit knows the öthingsö that God holds in a MYSTERY.

Look at Luke 10: 22 “All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.”

The Father is the **ONLY** One who knows Christ. **He** ALONE knows what Christ has accomplished for the objects of God’s everlasting love. **He** reveals these things to the objects of His love through the Spirit in the effectual preaching of the Gospel in every generation. **The** Spirit öreceives the things of Christ and shows themö unto regenerate sinners. He makes them öwilling in the day of His powerö.

Look on in our context at 1Corinthians 2: 12-13 “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

The sinner NOT embracing the Gospel is STILL following the öspirit of the worldö. **Although** the önatural manö can understand these things (intellectually), yet, only the öspiritual manö (the regenerate sinner) can VALUE them. **Only** the öspiritual manö can see them as VITAL in salvation. **Who** is the öspiritualö man?

He is the man who ötries the spiritsö and discerns between them.

Look at 1 John 4: 1-3 **"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.**

2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

Confession is agreeing with God. The öspiritualö man agrees with God about Christø coming. **And ALSO**, he agrees with God about what He accomplished.

Look at 1 John 4: 4-6 **"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.**

5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."

The öspiritual manö is the one who is öled by the Spirit of Godö.

Look at Romans 8: 14 **"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."**

Without the Spiritø revelation of Godø salvation in the heart, it remains a MYSTERY that the natural man cannot figure out or value. **The SECOND** thing about THINGS FREELY GIVEN: They are things that are Spiritually discerned.

That brings us to the LAST point. **THINGS FREELY GIVEN** are: **Things** the önatural manö will NOT receive.

Look at I Corinthians 2: 14 **"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."**

The önatural manö is every sinner as we are born into this world. **It is** every sinner BEFORE the Spirit visits them in regeneration. **This** man will not öreceiveö the öthings of the Spirit of Godö. **He will** not EMBRACE the THINGS (that are) FREELY GIVEN to sinners by God. **I.e. The** natural man will not embrace the salvation that is provided by the doing and dying of Christ ALONE. **He will NOT** have a salvation that he does not do anything to get or anything to keep.

Jim said it last week. **The** natural man HATES a salvation that is FREELY given. **You** are not going to tell the natural man that he does not have to do *something* for God to save him. **You** are never going to convince the natural man that his acceptance with God has NOTHING to do with HIS obedience, HIS work.

THIS is the ONE thing (in all the things to be considered), that the natural man will NEVER submit to. **It is** THE thing the natural man will never bow to. **It is** THE thing he will never embrace. **The** ñatural manö thinks that a salvation which is FREELY given is öfoolishnessö.

Look at I Corinthians 1: 18 “**For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.**”

The öpreaching of the crossö is the preaching of Christ crucified. **It is** the preaching of a salvation EARNED by Christ, (EARNED by His doing and dying ALONE), and given FREELY to those He died for. **Salvation** EARNED (entirely) by Christ and FREELY given is what Satan blinds sinnersö minds to.

Look at II Corinthians 4: 3-4 “**But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.**”
Satan is blinding the minds of sinners who reject Godø Gospel. **That** is how he keeps them in bondage. **That** is how he keeps sinners trying to work out THEIR OWN acceptance with God; THEIR OWN salvation.

Well! How do you know: **Who** is the ñatural manö and who is the öspiritual manö? **Who** is öwalking in the lightö or who is yet öwalking in darknessö? **Who** is öperishingö and who is öbeing savedö? **Look** at our last two verses.

Look at I Corinthians 2: 15-16 “**But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.**

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.”

We have already seen that the öspiritualö man believes the Gospel. **He** ötestsö the Spirits. **He** EMBRACES that which honors God as a Just God and Savior.

The öspiritualö man öjudgesö. **The** öspiritualö man discerns. **The** öspiritualö man examines the truth in order to come to the right conclusion. **He is** like a judge who examines the evidence in order to reach the right verdict.

The öspiritualö man has the ömind of Christö. **What** was Christø FIRST consideration (EVERY time)? **It was** the GLORY of God. **That** is why the öspiritualö man examines EVERYTHING (in salvation) in the light of how God is Just to Justify ungodly sinners on the basis of Christø work ALONE.

How can I know where I stand in this matter? **I can** know by my response to the Gospel. **I can** know by the Savior I trust. **I can** know by my NEED for the salvation Christ has accomplished by His obedience unto death for EVERY sinner He was given. **I can** know by my VALUE for the THINGS FREELY GIVEN.

Look at 1 Corinthians 4: 7. **Paul** exhorts brethren, "that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." **"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"** Temporal and spiritual.

If any sinner has ANYTHING in the way of eternal blessing from God, it is because God determined before the world began to show us mercy for Christ's sake. **Anything** we have is ours because Christ EARNED it (in full). **We** have it FREELY. **We** have done NOTHING to deserve it. **We** have done NOTHING to get it. **We** are NOT doing ANYTHING to keep it.

Whatever any of us have in the way of God's eternal blessing, we have it because of God's mercy and grace in Christ ALONE. **We** have it í í because it is a part of those "THINGS FREELY GIVEN to us of God".

by Mark Pannell