

That Which has Been... will Be

- Many of the problems Paul dealt with in the church at Corinth are exactly what are occurring today
- After examining what Paul was up against and how he dealt with it, we can have a better grasp and more confidence.
- Corinth was near the epi-center of human philosophy, and right in the center in regard to the ungodliness that these philosophies produced.
- America has now reached this same position

Peninsula (334–264 B.C.)

Verona

For centuries, Greek philosophers were located in Macedonia and Achaia. Their teachings were part of the *“vain manner of life, handed down from ancestors.”* Paul was dealing with many of their most decadent disciples in Corinth.

After four wars, Macedonia is annexed as a province (150–148 B.C.)



At
Kin

Rome defeat
Antiochus III (190)

Human Wisdom Infected Corinth

- *And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. 3 I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. 1 Cor 2:1-5*
- Paul knew the wisdom of men was worse than useless. All truth and wisdom are in God.

Human Wisdom Infected Corinth

- *However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, 8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. 1 Cor 2:6-10*

How Then and Now Intersect

- Paul's problem then, (and ours today) is that the wisdom of men is always the majority.
- Rulers, philosophers and their followers are the multitudes.
- Mature Christians who feel conviction that all the wisdom of God is within Scripture will always be in minority.
- We stand by faith, but shouldn't be surprised as this unfolds if we don't feel same "*weakness, fear and much trembling*" Paul did.

Human Wisdom Infecting Today

- Today, many portions of Scripture have been sliced, diced, carved and discarded.
- A large portion of those claiming to follow Christ and all unbelievers proclaim:
- The creation account is a myth
- God's interventions in His creation are fables
- All miracles and interventions are symbolic and not meant to be taken literally.
- God has been removed from all dealings and Inspiration has been rejected and scoffed at.

Paul Knew all Wisdom is in Scripture

- *attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col 2:2-3*
- *Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their own craftiness"; 20 and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile 1Cor 3:18-20*
- Mutual animosity between God and this world.

Human Wisdom Infecting Today

- Human traditions and creeds have replaced the simplicity of the Scriptures with the very philosophies that the apostles fought against.
- This blending of Scripture and human wisdom has become so engrained in the thinking of “*disciples*” nearly impossible to make a dent.
- These “*strongholds*” can be “*cast down*,” but only in the minds of those who trust Scripture:
- *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God*

Human Wisdom Infecting Today

- Today “*strongholds*” abound. Paul a chauvinist, homophobe, victim of the folly of his day.
- Paul’s writings have been assessed and the things that do fit today’s culture have been “*cancelled.*”
- To accomplish this, they have resorted to proclaiming that Paul was using his own wisdom to proclaim the things they reject.
- This is exactly what Paul faced in Corinth.

 *Do you look at things according to the outward appearance? If anyone is convinced in himself that he is Christ's, let him again consider this in himself, that just as he is Christ's, even so we are Christ's. 8 For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed — 9 lest I seem to terrify you by letters. 10 "For his letters," they say, "are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." 11 Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such we will also be in deed when we are present. 2 Cor 10:7-11*

- Paul proclaimed all that he wrote was by revelation (Scripture) (Eph. 4:3-4; 2Pet. 3:15-16).
- We can't pick through his writings and select what we like and reject the rest. (13 books)
- If we don't think Paul was inspired, none of his writings were inspired. Yet Peter called his writings Scripture so Peter's writings must also be rejected. (2 books). 15 of 27 no longer reliable.
- John said "*We (apostles) are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.*" (1Jn. 4:1). The NT would be shredded if 20 of the 27 books must be discarded.
- This is what human wisdom has done today.

The Real Problem with Paul's Writings

- *For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. 16 To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things? 17 For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ. 2 Cor 2:15-17*
- Those who want the aroma of death cancelled and removed, see it by discrediting the message and the messenger. But it is God's message.

- *Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. 2 But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. 2 Cor 4:1-3*

Conviction of Inspiration Protects

- *Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. 35 And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church. 36 Or did the word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached? 37 If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord. 38 But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant. 1 Cor 14:33-38*

All Strongholds Removed

- *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor 10:3-6*
- The weapons of our warfare (whole armor of God) are Scripture. They are mighty and for those who love the truth, all strongholds will be removed and the truth will shine forth.

Concluding Thought

- *For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles — 2 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, 3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: Eph 3:1-6*