MESSY GRACE: **1 Cor wk 3 – Are you a person spiritual?**

**(covered secret) Welcome to Corinth: A church planted by Paul 5 yrs earlier. He knew the city and people well. Sea port & entertainment city.**

**The original sin city. Town mascot, goddess sex (Aphrodite). A messed-up church in a messed-up city learning to walk w/ God**

**Word got to Paul that things were not going well – so he writes them… Dealing with issues we still deal with today.**

**Paul points to God’s grace – as they wrestled with their messy lives.**

**The first issue he deals with is - division**

**They were arguing over who is more spiritual.**

**B&N books large spiritual section. A lot of people consider themselves spiritual. What does it mean to be spiritual? there is little agreement.**

**Outside of church - If you mediate, pray a lot, drink bottled water, sit in silence, think positive thoughts, chant, do and give to charity, travel overseas, think worldwide - then maybe you are spiritual.**

**In some churches - you might be spiritual if - go to church a lot, go on a mission, memorize lots of verses, volunteer, speak in tongues (then your varsity) – then you’re spiritual. - Some if you only listen to a certain type of music, if you’re married, if you’re single, if you’re a virgin of if not, if you’re poor or broke, young or old. \* I saw, I can only Imagine.**

**What is a spiritual person? That is an issues Corinth is dealing with. Paul tries to clear this up showing what it means to be “spiritual”**

**He focuses repeatedly on the active ministry of the Holy Spirit - he will teach us a four-fold process… 1st one is this –**

**God the Holy Spirit works through - SPIRIT FILLED PREACHERS**

**The world is filled with preachers – every letter, every email, every TV program, every news source, song, class, book - a message is being preached to you all the time - with diff conflicting messages.**

**Which messages are true and which messenger can be trusted?**

**1 Corinthians 2:1** **And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence (not a great speaker) or human wisdom (others are smarter) as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. (I did not come as a salesman, but as a witness of the man, Jesus.) 2 For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. (conscience decision to focus on Jesus and the cross) 3 I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. (broken, weak, and nervous)**

**Looking at this we see:**

* **A spirit filled preacher is not Rockstar cool**

**Good thing, because I am not cool, though I secretly want to be.**

**I know I am not - never shot anyone, been in rehab, been a mobster, wild - never made the winning touchdown in school, college, or NFL - I don’t live in a big house, make a lot of money, drive a cool car, have perfect hair, perfect abs, or a fashion designer – I’ve had one woman in my life since I was 17 - I don’t have tattoos, don’t smoke, drink, or swear, I like to be at home w/ family. I’m not cool.**

**Preachers are not necessarily cool - Paul was not cool. Not liked by his peers - Historically he was short, bald, crooked nose and due to his attacks disabled, distorted, scared face, and walked with a limp.**

**Paul says he is coming – YAY! - Then he shows up… What!?**

**They wanted Brad Pitt, but what they got was Homer Simpson.**

* **A spirit filled preacher is not rock-solid calm**

**Paul said he was nervous, spoke w/ fear & trembling, and feeling not very smart.**

**Know this most preachers are insecure & uncomfortable. Including me.**

**Imagine if you did what I do for a living (74%) greatest fear public speaking. I do it every week. It’s challenging & intimidating. I don’t want to come off as a nut, strange, mean, ignorant, arrogant, or ill-prepared. Knowing that I’m judged by it and some will hate whatever I say. Sometimes I think this is not going well, and just want to go home.**

**Then I think of Paul in this letter and think, I preach like him.**

**When preaching a guy fell asleep and fell out a window & died. Acts 20**

**Preaching is a weird thing. BUT - God has chosen and mandated it.**

**The world needs a preacher**

**\*Mark 16:15 Jesus said, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.” \*Rom 10:14-15 How can they know without a preacher?**

**In a post-modern world there is a rejection of authority & truth. “There’s no truth, and no one has any authority over me.” But Jesus says, “I am the Truth, and all authority has been given to me. (Ma 18:18, Jo 14:6)**

**So, we preach that truth – Jesus.**

**The world has to have a preacher & The preacher needs to preach Jesus**

**This is the big E on the eye chart – can’t miss this! If you go to a church the message is to be JESUS – not just OT stories, practical principles, and lessons – did you learn about JESUS?**

**Can we learn about other stuff too? Kids, marriage, work, friendship, joy, peace, etc. Paul says - everything is tethered to the cross of Christ. He is the one thing that fixes everything = Jesus. Preach it**

**Jesus must be given clearly and reachable. When God had the Bible written he had to choose between classical Greek (academics & educated) and Koine Greek (reg folks, plumbers, farmers, school kids) Guess what He chose? Koine. But preachers like to translate it into classical, use big words so people think they’re smart. Is that Biblical?**

**It’s meant be pure – it’s got to be clear – and understandable.**

**That is what the humble Galilean peasant who swung a hammer, named Jesus would have done. In fact, he did not use Greek he used Aramaic to speak, the lowest slang of all.**

**The world needs a preacher, the preacher needs to preach Jesus, and**

**The preacher needs the Spirit of God. (Acts 1:8 … they needed power)**

**Paul says – I wasn’t cool – I wasn’t calm – but I did come in the power of the Holy spirit. And that is power enough. You know - I may not have the cool factor, but what I do have is, the HS.**

**1 Cor 2:4 My message and my preaching were not with wise (big and fancy) and persuasive words, (did not pressure or convince you) but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power,**

**Some are taught this means signs and wonders. God did use him in that at times – but this is not that. This is simply the HOLY SPIRIT revealed it to you as I spoke. (rest of ch2 says so)**

**Why is a spirit filled preacher so important?**

**2:5 so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God’s power.**

**Think about it - If someone can be persuaded into the kingdom by human wisdom, they can also be persuaded out of the kingdom by human wisdom. It was never real, just emotional.**

* **A spiritual person is spirit reliant not self-reliant (Holy Spirit)**

**How does an insecure, uncomfortable person share Jesus – the HS**

**Remember Corinth ss famous for its entertainment- captivated by large, fancy, beautiful buildings - skilled, impressive, smart orators, and actors - great music, bands, and parties.**

**Paul says I came in weakness, fear, and humility - not fancy, eloquent, or perfect words – just the power of God.**

**If we want God to use us, we must rely on the Spirit’s power – not just our gifting. God empowers the gift! Reliant on God, not just abilities.**

**Listen young minister, you can’t learn this in school – you learn in in the spirit - on your face.**

**When Holy Spirit empowered words are heard by a heart that is called – WOW! Some of histories famous preachers were terrible preachers.**

**God the Holy Spirit works through Spirit-filled preachers to teach**

**SPIRITUAL TRUTH**

**We all come into the world without theology - not knowing anything - somebody needed to teach us about God, Heaven, hell, sin, grace, salvation – the whole thing. We humbly listen and respond to Spiritual truth by the Holy Spirit.**

**1 Cor 2:6 We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, (those growing in Christ.)**

**Ever notice a baby will put anything into its mouth – so will the immature with their spirit. Does not use spiritual discernment to know what is good to eat. That is unhealthy spirituality.**

**(we speak) but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age (demonic), who are coming to nothing. (certain defeat)**

**We are not giving typical logic, opinions, or ideas – this is not Dr Phil and Oprah salutations with self-help seminar Sundays – that is all man’s wisdom – wisdom of this age.**

**1 Cor 2:7 No, we declare God’s wisdom, (spiritual truth) a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. (An epic written before creation. God’s plan, spoken of in images and pictures throughout the OT – a mystery we can now see! The mystery!) 8 None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (Jesus, God who rules and reigns over all - everything in life) 9 However, as it is written: (Is 64:4) “What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived” - the things God has prepared for those who love him – (no mind would have imagined the messiah would bare a cross!)**

* **A spiritual person grows in the “mystery” of God – Jesus**

**Ephesians 1:9, 3:3-5, 6:19, Colossians 1:26-27, Mark 4:11 - the mystery revealed!**

**The Spirit of God gives us access to the deep things of God**

**Before Jesus came, God’s people had a vague understanding of God, his glory, mercy, eternity, grace and provision – in signs and symbols.**

**But now thru the HS – the mystery is revealed. Jesus the Lord of Glory!**

**1 Cor 2:10 these are the things (what things? Jesus crucified) God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.**

**If you have ever wanted to know, desire to know, care to know, or understood – that is the HS. (John 1:12-13 – our spiritual birth is not born of blood (family), desire (flesh), or will (choice)– but of God!)**

**2:11 For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.**

**Ever look at your dog and wonder what he thinking? You can guess, but you really can’t know unless they tell you. They can’t. Likewise, we could guess what God is thinking (wisdom, thoughts) - but we could never know, unless He told us. Enter Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is God with skin - the Holy Spirit is God within.**

**Now we see! What a child of God believes is diff than what those who are not Christian believe. About what? About everything that truly matters - everything. Paul says the world is clueless – they have no idea what God thinks – without the Holy Spirit within.**

* **The spiritual person understands when you are born again the Spirit moves in.**

**You are spirit filled at your new birth in Jesus – not later!**

**(Gal 4:4-7, Ro 8:9-16, John 3:5, 14:16, 1 Co 12:13, Eph 1:13-14, 1 Jo 4:4)**

**1 Cor 2:12 What we have received (when we believe) is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, (you receive the HS at salvation – why?) so that we may understand what God has freely given us. (The HS gives us the ability to understand Jesus and our salvation) 13 This is what we speak, (Jesus and the cross) not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words.**

**God the Holy Spirit works through Spirit-filled preachers to teach spiritual truth in…SPIRITUAL WORDS**

**When you became a follower of Jesus – you learn spiritual truth, from spiritual leaders, using spiritual words – you start to understand words like – sin, grace, heaven, hell, faith, salvation, born-again. Words rarely used in context outside of Christianity. But now they matter.**

**You may know a lot – read a lot – study a lot – smart and well experienced - but do you know the spiritual truth of - your sin? That word that can only be truly understood by the Spirit. I’m evil. Okay, now what? JESUS, the cross - grace - mercy - faith. Without the Spirit they are just words.**

**God the Holy Spirit works through Spirit-filled preachers to teach spiritual truth in spiritual words to make… SPIRITUAL PEOPLE**

**1 Cor 2:14 The person without the Spirit (the natural person) does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.**

**\* The natural person - sees all this as a waste of time - don’t be mad at them, they cannot understand. They’re blind & w/out spiritual ears.**

**It’s like the world has earbuds in – your talking to them and they just ignore you. You think they are mean – no they are just spiritually deaf.**

**Blindfolded – how do you like my shirt – don’t get mad, they can’t see!**

**Talking to a guy in a casket – you want to go get tacos – how rude! Don’t get mad they can’t do anything about it – they’re dead!**

**The natural man is spiritually blind, deaf, and dead – they are not dumb – they just don’t get it. They need a spiritual intervention to open their understanding.**

**It takes a miracle of the Holy Spirit to understand. He draws, leads, softens, reveals, opens eyes and ears, breaks a rebellious, hard callous heart - and points to JESUS!**

**The natural man – sees all this as a waste of time, but**

**\* The spiritual man – sees all this as a salvation line**

**They can look back and see how the HS leading them all the way to Jesus. Some of you looking back at your life can now see it – it is clear.**

**1 Cor 2:15 The person with the Spirit (the spiritual person) makes judgments about all things, (discernment thru the God’s Word and the HS) but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, (they don’t discern or understand us – How dare you… don’t sweat their misguided judgement of you. The natural person is not in a place to judge spiritual truth…)**

* **The Spiritual person grows in discernment.**

**They accept the things of God, embrace the truth, and uses spiritual judgement to make choices. (Paul addresses this more)**

**1 Cor 2:16 for, (Is 40:13) “Who has known the mind of the Lord (LORD) so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ. (Christ is the LORD – Yahweh)**

**We alone don’t have access to the mind of God – but we do have access to Jesus. And that gives us access to the Spirit of God – who gives us access to the mind of God – thru His Word – giving us God’s thoughts on sex, marriage, family, kids, work, dating, etc.**

**How Should we respond to all this – a few thoughts:**

1. **Remember - To be spiritual means that you are filled with, led by, and empowered by, God the Holy Spirit.**

**Being spiritual is not something that you do, being spiritual is something that God does in you.**

1. **Remember - You do not need to be a professional to be spiritual**

**You do not need to pay a professional to yell at you.**

**God used, Paul a flawed and imperfect – spirit-filled man.**

1. **Remember - It is not your role to make people spiritual**

**You can’t talk someone into Jesus.**

**We share the Gospel your best – the Holy Spirit does the rest**

**We sow the seed – the Holy Spirit reaps.**

**The pressure is off us when we let the HS lead.**

**Paul spoke the word – God empowered the word.**

**Our role is to pray for others, love like a fool, walk it out, and tell our story – the rest is the HS to do.**

**So, what is under this – it is a mystery.**

**But my family knows, ask them.**