

## SERMON OUTLINE

**SERMON TITLE:** How to Know God Through the Bible

**SERMON REFERENCE:** 1 Corinthians 2:1-16

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #1143

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The way to be blessed is to obey God.
  - i) There is no blessing without obedience.
- b) The way to obey God is to trust God.
  - i) When we trust God in tithing, we will believe that we can do more with nine-tenths and God as a partner than we can do with ten-tenths by ourselves.
    - (1) Malachi 3:10
- c) In order to trust God, you must love God.
  - i) You can't trust anyone you don't love.
  - ii) When you love God, you automatically trust Him.
- d) You can't love a God whom you don't know.
  - i) You must know God in order to love God.
  - ii) In order to be blessed, you must obey.
  - iii) In order to obey, you must trust.
  - iv) In order to trust, you must love.
  - v) In order to love, you must know.
  - vi) This chain of events begins with the idea of knowing God.
- e) Today's message will show us how to know God through the Bible.
  - i) It will show us how God can become real to us.
    - (1) Not just someone we know about, but someone we know.
    - ii) To know Him is to love Him.
    - iii) To love Him is to trust Him.
    - iv) To trust Him is to obey Him.
    - v) To obey Him is to be blessed.
- f) 1 Corinthians 2 deals with the idea of knowing God and the word "wisdom."
  - i) Wisdom is the knowledge of God.
  - ii) Wisdom is seeing life from God's perspective, from His point of view.

2) HUMAN WISDOM AND ITS DEFICIENCY (1 CORINTHIANS 2:1-9, 14)

- a) 1 Corinthians 2:1-5
- b) Human wisdom is superficial.
  - i) We can learn facts about God.
    - (1) We can know that God is omnipotent, omniscient, etc.
  - ii) But learning facts about God is not the same thing as knowing God.
  - iii) The people at Corinth had been swept away by worldly philosophy; and the Apostle Paul, though mighty in intellect and learning, was afraid that their faith might stand in human wisdom.
  - iv) 1 Corinthians 2:3
    - (1) Paul did not want people to follow him.
    - (2) Paul did not want to use human ingenuity, philosophy or human wisdom in order to get any kind of follow-ship because the deficiency of human wisdom is that it is so superficial.
  - v) We can know about God, yet not know God.

- c) Human wisdom is so transitory.
  - i) 1 Corinthians 2:6
    - (1) The word “princes” in this passage stands for intellectuals, those who have attained in their learning.
    - (2) “The princes of this world” literally means “the princes of this age.”
      - (a) That means, “for this time.”
      - (b) There are certain people in this day and age who are supposed to be the great, intellectual leaders; but Paul said that all of that is going to come to naught.
  - ii) The wisdom of the princes of this world is going to come to nothing.
- d) Human wisdom is so limited.
  - i) 1 Corinthians 2:7
    - (1) Human wisdom is totally incapable of understanding or probing into what Paul calls here “the divine mystery.”
    - (2) The “mystery” Paul mentions is a sacred secret that we can only know as God reveals Himself to us.
  - ii) Human wisdom can never fathom God.
    - (1) The finite can never probe the infinite.
  - iii) The natural man can never know the supernatural God.
- e) The wisdom of this world is so dangerous and ungodly.
  - i) 1 Corinthians 2:8
    - (1) The classic proof of the bankruptcy of human wisdom is the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.
  - ii) The Lord Jesus was crucified by the best minds of His day.
    - (1) It was the Jewish and Roman intelligentsia that nailed Him to the cross.
    - (2) And they did not do it casually but carefully after they had applied their minds to it.
      - (a) John 11:53
- f) Why does a natural man (a person without Christ) have such difficulty understanding the things of God?
  - i) 1 Corinthians 2:9
    - (1) The Apostle Paul is saying that the reason they don’t know God is because they don’t have the proper equipment.
      - (a) They are trying to understand things with their eyes, ears and heart.
    - (2) When Paul mentions our eyes and ears in this passage, he is talking about objective knowledge.
      - (a) These are things we can read, see and hear.
    - (3) When Paul talks about the heart, he is talking about subjective feeling.
    - (4) We can never know God through objective fact or subjective feeling.
      - (a) You may know Greek and Hebrew, but you will not know God that way.
      - (b) A natural person does not have the ability to know Him.

- ii) 1 Corinthians 2:14
  - (1) The word “natural” is a translation of the Greek word which means “soulish” man.
- iii) God created man as body, soul and spirit.
  - (1) With his body, he has physical life and knows the physical world.
    - (a) With his body, he knows the world beneath him.
  - (2) With his soul, he has psychological life and knows the psychological world.
    - (a) His soul is his mind, emotions and will.
    - (b) With his soul, he knows the world around him.
  - (3) With his spirit, he knows the spiritual world.
    - (a) With his spirit, he knows the world above him.
- iv) When Adam sinned against God, Adam died.
  - (1) He did not die in his body or in his soul, but he died in his spirit.
    - (a) His death was a spiritual death.
    - (b) Genesis 2:17
    - (c) Adam continued to exist, but he was spiritually dead.
  - (2) Rather than being a spiritual man, Adam became a natural man.
    - (a) He became a soulish man.
    - (b) Rather than knowing God through the spirit, Adam now has his soul as the organ of knowledge.
      - (i) His soul deals with what his eye can see, his ear can hear and what his heart can feel.
      - (ii) He lives by mind, emotion and will.
    - (c) He doesn’t know God because it is the spirit that is the organ of spiritual knowledge.
- v) We can only know God through the Spirit.
  - (1) We can never figure God out.
  - (2) We can never come to God intellectually and understand Him.
- vi) When God wants to speak to us and teach us, He is going to do so in the spirit.
  - (1) Romans 8:16
  - (2) This doesn’t mean that God bypasses our mind or that we have to crucify our intellect.
    - (a) It means that we know God in our spirit, and our mind only analyzes, codifies, organizes and expresses what we know down deep in our spirit.
- vii) A natural man is a man who has only had one birth.
  - (1) He is born into the natural world and is bound by the material world.
  - (2) He can never know the things of the Spirit of God until he has a second birth.
    - (a) 1 Corinthians 2:14

- (i) There may be nothing wrong with a natural person's mind, emotion and will, but the soul is the wrong organ for knowing God.
  - viii) We know God primarily with our spirit.
    - (1) 1 Corinthians 2:14
  - g) We cannot know God through human wisdom.
- 3) HEAVENLY WISDOM AND ITS SUFFICIENCY (1 CORINTHIANS 2:9-16)
  - a) God has given us supernatural revelation.
    - i) God simply reveals Himself.
    - ii) 1 Corinthians 2:9-10
      - (1) The word "But" that begins verse 10 is in contradistinction to what we perceive with our eyes, ears and emotion.
    - iii) The only way that we can know God is for God to disclose Himself to us.
      - (1) The natural can never know the supernatural until the infinite reveals Himself to the finite and the supernatural reveals Himself to us supernaturally.
      - (2) 1 Corinthians 2:10
    - iv) 1 Corinthians 2:12
      - (1) It takes the Holy Spirit revealing truth to us in order for us to really know the truth.
        - (a) Truth can be preached, but only the Holy Spirit of God can impart truth.
    - v) John 3:27
      - (1) We will never pry truth out of the Word of God.
        - (a) If God doesn't give it, then we'll not have it.
    - vi) 1 Corinthians 12:3
      - (1) No one can have Christ as Lord in his life until the Spirit of God gives him that.
        - (a) No one can say that Jesus Christ is Lord but by the Holy Ghost.
    - vii) 1 Thessalonians 1:5
    - viii) 1 Corinthians 2:4-5
    - ix) Revelation is the communication of God's truth to man by God Himself.
  - b) God has given us supernatural inspiration.
    - i) 1 Corinthians 2:12-13
      - (1) When Paul uses the word "we" in this passage, he is referring to the apostles.
        - (a) The apostles received this message.
        - (b) Then, he said that the apostles gave this message.
    - ii) What is the difference between revelation and inspiration?
      - (1) Revelation is God disclosing Himself.
      - (2) Inspiration is those taking what God has given and recording it in such a way that it is absolutely without error.
        - (a) It is the very Word of God.

- iii) 1 Corinthians 2:13
  - (1) The Holy Ghost gave the words.
- iv) We believe in verbal inspiration.
  - (1) The word “verbal” means “word-by-word” inspiration.
  - (2) God did not just inspire the thoughts of the Bible, but He inspired the words of the Bible.
    - (a) You cannot have thoughts without words any more than you can have mathematics without numbers.
  - (3) Matthew 4:4
- v) God disclosed Himself.
  - (1) Not only is there revelation, but there is also inspiration as these words inspired are written down.
    - (a) And we have them in the Bible.
  - (2) God gave the very words of the Bible.
- c) God has given us supernatural illumination.
  - i) 1 Corinthians 2:14-16
    - (1) This is illumination.
    - (2) The same Holy Spirit of revelation and the same Holy Spirit of inspiration is now the same Holy Spirit of illumination.
      - (a) He is the one who illumines the Christian.
      - (b) He is the one who turns the spiritual light on so that we can understand the things of God.
  - ii) We have a divinely inspired Bible, but we cannot understand it apart from spiritual, supernatural illumination.
  - iii) We can never know the Bible as we ought to until we have the mind of Christ.
  - iv) Psalm 119:18
    - (1) This is a good prayer to pray when we begin to study the Word of God.
  - v) A person who is living by divine illumination is going to be a mystery to those around him.
    - (1) 1 Corinthians 2:15
      - (a) “He that is spiritual judges all things” means that he has a penetrating insight into the way things work.
        - (i) He has a supernatural wisdom about him.
      - (b) “Yet he himself is judged of no man” literally means that he’s not understood by any man.
        - (i) He is “discerned” of no man.
    - (2) The world is not going to understand us.
      - (a) We will know some things that they won’t know, and they will think that we are the crazy ones.
      - (b) They cannot understand us, but we understand them.
        - (i) We have the mind of Christ, but they can’t understand Christ.
  - vi) What does illumination mean?
    - (1) It does not mean that we can know everything about God.

- (a) No one knows everything about God.
- (b) We're not supposed to know everything about God.
- (c) Deuteronomy 29:29
- (2) Illumination does not extend to areas beyond the Word of God.
  - (a) For example, if you're going to take a math test that you haven't studied for, it will do you no good to bow your head and say, "Spirit of God, illumine me."
    - (i) If you haven't studied for it, you're going to flunk.
  - (b) Pray for wisdom, but study for knowledge.
- (3) Illumination does not mean that you won't study the Word of God.
  - (a) 2 Timothy 2:15
    - (i) If we want God to illumine us, then we will study the Bible.
    - (ii) "Rightly dividing" means "to cut it straight."
- (4) Illumination does not mean that there are no spiritual requirements.
  - (a) We cannot ask God to illumine us if we are not walking a clean and pure life.
  - (b) 1 Peter 2:1-2
- (5) It does mean that the average person in the church who is obedient and diligent can understand the Word of God.
  - (a) 1 Corinthians 1:26-28
    - (i) God takes ordinary people and does extraordinary things through those people.
    - (b) If we will get our hearts right with God, ask the Holy Spirit to illumine us, and study to show ourselves approved unto God, then God will reveal Himself to us supernaturally out of the Bible.
- (6) It does mean that we can have personal communion with God.
  - (a) Jesus walked with two disciples on the road to Emmaus.
    - (i) Luke 24:45
    - (ii) They walked together for about seven miles.
    - (iii) Luke 24:27
    - (iv) Even though they were walking with the very Son of God, they didn't understand until He opened their understanding.
- (7) It is supernatural.
  - (a) We will never know until God gives us knowledge of Himself.
    - (i) This is why we must come reverently and prayerfully to the Word of God.
  - (b) Luke 24:32

#### 4) CONCLUSION

- a) Everyone wants to be blessed.
  - i) There is no blessing without obedience.
  - ii) There is no obedience without trust.
  - iii) There is no trust without love.
  - iv) There is no love without knowledge.

- v) There is no knowledge of God without revelation, inspiration and illumination.
  - (1) The illumination is our part where we come to God and surrender to Him and ask the Holy Spirit to open our eyes.
    - (a) Psalm 119:18
  - (2) When we come to God's Word in this way, the Bible will burst aflame in our heart and mind, and God will teach us the things out of His Word.
- b) Do you know Jesus Christ personally?
  - i) If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- c) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16