



Knowing a Lot of Spiritual Things

In order to progress to live their faith, the Corinthians needed to realize there's more to learning than just knowing verses: "...*Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.*" We can mentally know a lot, yet, "...*knoweth nothing as we ought to know.*" (1 Cor. 8:1-2) This is having head knowledge.

The thrust of a godly life and ministry is to love (prefer/edify) others: "*Let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.*" (Rom. 14:19) This isn't natural to man, yet it is God's way. Thus, saints will remain self-focused unless they purpose to yield to Him.

A functional faith in God's Word would respond to others in love. This attitude comes from conviction in the Word, thinking on it for application in order to make wise decisions. 'Knowing things' is first, but God desires us to progress to 'apply' what is known to build others up in love to mature them.

Our unique opportunity is to walk by faith in our convictions. Meditate on how to help others and become aware that each person is at a different place in their faith journey. A careful approach in love is most effective, considering what a saint needs to grow spiritually, realizing his specific challenges and strongholds. God provides Paul as our example: "*But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children.*" (1 Thess. 2:7)

This is Allowing Christ to Live Within

Just A Minute! With Scripture

The King James Bible is used for all references. Verses may be underlined, or made bold for emphasis.



1 Corinthians 8: Manifesting Heart Understanding

Chapter 8 reveals that the Corinthians were not yet demonstrating godly love. Saints applied doctrine without considering how it could affect others. We know food isn't defiled when offered to idols: "...All things are indeed pure..." (Rom. 14:20) However, when stronger saints ate offerings to idols, it stirred 'thinking errors' in those watching, motivating them to eat sacrifices against their own consciences. This was a sin against the weaker saints. "*And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?*" (1 Cor. 8:11)

Faith in basic Truths, such as Romans 12-16, would have taught the Corinthians "...not to think more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (Rom. 12:3) If they had reflected upon the needs of these weak members of the Body of Christ in love, they could have avoided hurting them.

What can we learn from this chapter? Wise believers would consider that 'what they do or say,' and even 'how something is said,' will impact others. As a parent with his children, believers can treat 'the weak' gently, as those who could be easily wounded or shipwrecked. Babes need to be fed the Word, but first milk and then, slowly progressing to meatier teaching. It is NOT a fast process. If fed too quickly or with too challenging spiritual food, they can easily choke.

Teach and deal with the weak according to where they are in their growth and what they can handle. Paul purposed to be gentle, cherishing each saint as a family member. "*So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.*" (1 Thess. 2:8)

Believers can exercise the doctrine they know to make wise discernments and manifest heart understanding. The strong can purposely respond in love, for the good of the weak, considering how to say things, what is needed, and how much doctrine can be tolerated. "*But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*" (Heb. 5:14) **To Do:** Yield to God, showing heart understanding with thought and consideration to others. It will bear abundant fruit.



Search it out!

Living As Who You Are In Christ

I Corinthians 8: Approaching Others For Their Good

Examine verses!



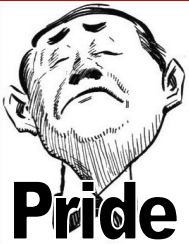
Chapter 8 helps to progress the Corinthians & all saints in the Body of Christ. It has to do with how to deal with weaker believers who have not yet progressed, even in basic areas of the gospel of Christ. Paul cautions them to be careful as they could defile or wound someone's weak conscience. He is teaching about charity: *"But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak."* (I Cor. 8:9)

(I Corinthians 8 will be broken into sections below to provide clarity about dealing with the weak and the motive to serve.)

Verses 1-3: In this first section, the Corinthians are taught that just knowing doctrine can produce head knowledge. Knowledge alone will tend to 'puff us up' in our thinking. We can then think more highly of ourselves than we ought. The issue God desires them to realize is one of the goals for 'knowing' is to function in godly charity with others. The result of the doctrine working within the inner man, produces this type of selfless love. **To Do:** Use a concordance to study further the issue of being 'puffed up.'

Verses 4-8: The next issue addressed is that not every man (brother in Christ) will grasp all the basics of the gospel. It takes time to digest the Truth to really gain understanding, confidence, and conviction. The example given: Some may not realize there is one God and Lord Jesus Christ who has given us all things. *"Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge..."* (Verse 7) This seems almost unbelievable. Yet, progression in understanding happens uniquely. God's process of ejecting & replacing false teaching takes time. Care is needed when dealing with saints. **To Do:** Examine II Samuel 12 to see another place where a saint was blind to basic Truth. Can you find other similar situations? Consider: Esau, Jonah, or Peter.

Verses 9-13: Paul offers a warning to those saints who have knowledge. They should not use this understanding carelessly, in a way that will stumble the weaker brother. The love attitude that can be developed by yielding unto Christ in them is: *"Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."* (I Cor. 8:13) **To Do:** Read Romans 14 to observe a similar teaching about dealing with the weak.

**Pride**

The Corinthian Church had many flesh issues. A key challenge was definitely pride. A new, freelance writer, Jill Nelson, provides insight on this issue from God's Word.

In the first chapter of Paul's writings to the Corinthians (I Cor. 1:18-31), he teaches them that God does not value their pedigrees, religious practices, worldly wisdom, or family traditions. The believers at Corinth struggled with the concept that they were saved by faith alone: *"...by grace are ye saved through faith..."* was very foreign to them. (Eph. 2:8-9)

The Corinthians were a mixed population of Jews and Greeks who were challenged with the fact that their 'signs and wisdom' (I Cor. 1:22) were no longer needed to obtain salvation or to serve Him. *"That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."* (I Cor. 2:5)

We are no different than the Corinthians since the American culture today, even most Churches, place self-worth and value in man's wisdom, aka your intellectual achievement, materialistic wealth, and career attainment. Contrast those fleshly ideals with what God values in a believer: *"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."* (Colossians 3:12-13)

By daily prayer and studying His Word you can learn what the Lord values and apply it to your life each day. *"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."* (Col. 3:2-3) There is nothing wrong with obtaining an education, holding down a job, buying a home, etc., but be careful you do not become prideful: *"...He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."* (I Cor. 1:31) We can give Him the glory for the work He did on the cross for us.



What Prevents Many Saints From Living the Truth?

Each person basically starts off the same. They are given life, breath, and the essentials for living. All these are from God: *“For In him we live, and move, and have our being...” (Acts 17:28)* From birth forward, what happens on earth is unequal and differs tremendously. Choices in life determine whether we will live the Truth. **To Do:** Listed below are things that help us walk by faith. Consider your own life. Renew your mind by the Word and make changes as needed:

Flesh responses: God cares ‘how we respond’ to life challenges. He desires us to yield and trust Him to live His Word as an instrument of righteousness in life, but not to fear nor be prideful. (Rom. 6) This process impacts learning, affecting our walk, & those around us. (II Cor. 4:17) We can be content, trust God as sufficient, pushing through difficulties. (Phil. 4:11)

Our focus: Hyper-focusing on struggles and circumstances, rather than Christ in us, keeps us stuck, minimizing His power. A lack of faith, plus pride causes us to think we can live life without God. Fleshly fears are instead the focus and exalted, rather than being thankful and living by faith, that is, what the Spirit has taught us. ‘God is fully able’ to use our problems to help us learn and focus on spiritual things above. (Rom. 8)

Use of Time: If we spend time to read, study, and meditate upon Scripture, we can *“...be conformed to the image of His Son...” (Rom. 8:29)* This is the renewing of the mind by the power and wisdom of God being deposited in our inner man. It enables us to make wise judgments and develop godly love, choosing to yield and be a living sacrifice. (Rom. 12:1-3)

Awareness: Romans 12 teaches we are members one of another, but we may not realize the significance of members of the Body of Christ. Each member may have important unmet needs, affecting the whole. God uses saints to meet each other’s needs and hold forth Truth to the lost.

Maturity: A believer may not know that God desires each of us to grow in knowledge and conviction. A ‘form of doctrine’ (Rom. 6:17) was written down for us by Paul in Romans-Philemon. Clarity and conviction in this Truth is essential to live as a mature believer in the details of life. There are many who are blinded or have been swept up into false teaching, religiousness, fear, and pride. This can sidetrack them from knowing and applying the Truth. Set it all aside to trust the Living God to help you.

There are many things that prevent saints from practically living the Truth of sound doctrine. In most cases, it boils down to setting fear and pride aside, to walk by faith as you grow. It is a



choice to yield unto what God has taught you. He is always there for you and able to help: Pray, read, and meditate on Scripture. *“Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” (II Tim. 1:13)* **Choices Reflect Our Heart!**

Consider That a Person May Grow Slowly

Once you, as a believer, attain a clear understanding in the basics of your faith, it can become tiresome to patiently deal with others. Some saints seem to take ‘so long’ to trust in the fundamentals: like faith without works and confusing Israel’s instructions with ours, the Body.

People progress differently, get stumbled in spots, and can even regress. It seems unbelievable that a saint would have difficulty with simple Truths.

Since dealing with new saints is a common challenge, we’re given an example to help: *“But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge...” (I Cor. 8:6-7)*

Surely, every saint knows that one God provides all! The term ‘every man’ is used, and then defined in the context of the chapter. (vs. 11-13.) *“But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.”* It’s clearly referring to believers in Christ.

Consider that only God can know someone’s heart. Yet we have a job, that is to be long-suffering to teach others where they are at, and not to judge or be intolerant/impatient: *“Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain.” (Phil. 2:16)*

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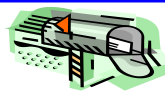
To:

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...” (Romans 3:24)

Personal Insights
Practical Ideas on How to Study: Part III

Many Christians attend doctrinally good Churches and Bible studies. They may also use sound materials: devotionals, study books, or sermons. All these things can help you in many ways as you live your Christian life. However, there are some additional, related activities that can help you live your walk of faith. Consider applying one or two of these, if it is not already a regular part of your spiritual time:

- 1) **Personally read the Bible:** Plan time to read the Word each day, not just listening to it on a Bible app or CD. (I Thess. 2:13, Heb. 4:12) There is a difference in how you will process the Scripture, when you read/focus on the words. It would also be profitable to read Paul’s epistles as many times as you can this year. Another idea is to read through the Bible, if you’ve never done so.
- 2) **Practical Application:** Regularly think and meditate upon what you read, through the day. Consider thinking about how to apply specific verses, using and sharing them with others. (I Tim.4:15)
- 3) **Study partner:** It can be encouraging to have a friend or family member, in which to be accountable i.e. bible study/phone call. Ideas: Discuss questions, insights, and how to apply what you learn.
- 4) **Ministry:** If you’re not involved in a ministry to serve others, consider joining or starting one. Choose something of interest to use what God has given to you. When you put to practice what you know, it can move Truth from merely head knowledge to heart understanding. (Phil. 2:12-13)



‘On A Personal Side’

We welcome feedback & questions and would like to hear from you!

From Our Readers

- “I really enjoy getting and reading Just A Minute. I read it several times so I don’t miss anything, and then I save it in a book to read again. Here is some money...to help with costs and stamps.” (Arizona)
- “Thank you (for the Bible reading schedule link). I started (reading) early. I love this link and I got my girlfriend to do it with me and hopefully another girlfriend.” (Washington)
- “Such a flesh/spirit battle...one day it will be over...so exhausting sometimes...” (Virginia)
- “I am always greatly encouraged by your support and advice...I am so much humbled by the grace of God working on both sides of the Atlantic, from my side and your side.” (Africa)

Ministry Happenings

***Some recent happenings/needs in parts of Nigeria. Please pray for Grace Lighthouse Ministries:**

- 1) Obtaining land for a children’s home and use as a ministry headquarters.
- 2) Purchase of sweaters for needy children.
- 3) Acquiring songbooks to use in Children’s ministry.
- 4) A vehicle to minister to various areas within Nigeria.

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