

Sermon: Spirit-Taught Words
Text: 1 Corinthians 2

Discussion Questions:

How many of you have ever heard of a man named Archimedes (pronounced ahr-kuh-mee-deez)? He was a Greek mathematician, physicist and inventor who died in 212BC - best known for his investigations of buoyancy. Archimedes is said to have shouted "*Eureka*" – ("I have found it!") – as he stepped into his bath and realized that the volume of an object can be measured by determining how much water it displaces.

This "Eureka Moment" – also known as the Aha Moment! – is something we can all relate to. It's the common human experience of suddenly understanding a previously incomprehensible problem or concept. It's like a switch gets flipped, and a light goes on. In a moment of clarity, you see what just moments ago was in the darkness.

- Has anything like this ever happened to you?
- Are there factors that have to be in place in order for eureka moments to occur?
- What factors are working against these eureka moments? What keeps us from these moments of great insight or epiphany?
- How, if at all, does this discussion of Aha Moments! fit within a discussion of faith and Christianity?

Examination:

- Read **2 Corinthians 4:1-6**.
 - Paul talks here of "*setting forth the truth plainly*" (v. 2). What do you think he means by that? What is the plain truth?
 - How is it that when Paul is speaking the truth plainly, he is "*commending himself to everyone's conscience in the sight of God*" (v. 2)? What does that mean?
 - Verse 4 introduces the concept of veiling. What does a veil do? Where does this veil come from? What are people veiled from? How impactful is this veil? Why do some people have a veil and others don't (or is that even the case?)?
 - Who (or what) is the god of this age?
 - Take a few minutes to talk about the phrase in verse 4: "*...the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ.*" What is the subject of this phrase? What role does the gospel play? How is the gospel a light? How does the gospel shine light on the glory of Christ?
 - Paul states very clearly in v. 5 what he preaches. What is it? And, what does he see as his role?

- When did God say, “*Let light shine out of darkness*”? Paul is comparing the light that is appears in creation to...what?
- It says here that God “*makes His light shine in our hearts.*” This is compared to the same act of creation that we see in Genesis 1. What are the implications of this comparison?
- Can this act of God - making His light shine in our hearts - be described as an Aha Moment!? What role do we - as humans - play in bringing this moment about?
- Read **1 Corinthians 2** (you might want to read it twice - this passage holds some deep truths).
 - Why didn’t Paul come with eloquence or human wisdom (v. 1)? Was this the result of a lack of ability - or a choice he made? Apply this same question to verse 4, where Paul states that his preaching wasn’t with wise and persuasive words.
 - What do you think Paul meant when he says that he “*resolved to know nothing while he was with [them] except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*” (v. 2)?
 - Why doesn’t Paul want our faith to rest on human wisdom (v. 5)? Does this mean that we disengage our brains when talking about faith? Is this a verse that the opponents of Christianity can use to show that faith in Christ is for the “mindless” (or as Karl Marx stated, “Religion is an opium for the masses”)?
 - How is the gospel a “*message of wisdom among the mature*” (v. 6)? How is it a “*mystery that has been hidden*” (v. 7)? How might an understanding of the Gospel have prevented the crucifixion (v. 8)?
 - What is Paul referring to when he quotes Isaiah 64:4 (“*No eye has seen; no ear has heard; no human mind has conceived*”)? How is it that these things are only revealed by the Spirit?
 - How do we receive “the Spirit who is from God” (v. 12)? How important is it that we do this? What effect does this have?
 - What are the spiritual realities that these Spirit-taught words teach (v. 13)?
 - Coming back to the notion of Aha Moments!, do these verses speak to this at all? Doesn’t it appear from Paul’s teaching here, that without the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, the Truths of God sound like ‘mere foolishness’ when we hear them?
 - How do we acquire the “*mind of Christ*” (v. 16)?

Application:

Take some time in this coming week to quiet yourself before God. Don’t come with any requests. Simply be still, and quiet in God’s presence. And, while in that state - ask God to fill you in fresh and new ways with His Spirit. Receive from the Lord more of His Holy Presence - more of His Spirit. Seek to be filled in a new way with the mind of Christ... and listen. Listen to what the Spirit is teaching you.