

# The Deep Things of God

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- [ 0 : 00 ] Let's turn back then to the chapter that we read, the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians, chapter 2.
- And we can read again at verse 10. These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit.
- For the Spirit searches everything, even the depth of God. If you're using the authorised version, it says even the deep things of God.
- For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.
- And so on. Particularly the words in verse 10, For the Spirit searches everything, even the deep things or the depth of God.
- [ 1 : 05 ] You might think that when you first come to read this particular chapter in Corinthians, that it is an extremely difficult, deep theological letter that Paul is writing to this church in Corinth.
- But if you look back at the beginning of the letter and the rest of the letter, a letter which was written from Ephesus when Paul was in Ephesus, round about 55, somewhere between 55 and 57 AD, and is written to the Corinthians.
- This is five years after Paul has left Corinth. And you remember on his missionary journey there in Acts 18, that he had stayed there for 18 months, which is quite a long period of time to spend in a particular city, or at least for Paul to have spent in a particular city.
- But you remember also that he had been given a vision, in which the Lord had said to him to be of good cheer, for he had much people in that city.
- And so Paul had established the church of Corinth, and then after that period of time had left and moved back on his journeys, and eventually writes to them from Ephesus.
- [ 2 : 35 ] And the reason that he writes the letter, we don't really see that until, well we see part of it throughout the letter, but we don't see how he's come to the knowledge of this until we reach the final chapter of the letter.
- And in chapter 16 and verse 17, he says that, I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaïas, because they have made up for your absence.
- And what we then discover is that those are three of the, perhaps elders, we don't know for sure, it doesn't say, but three who have come from Corinth, and to Paul they have brought news of the church at Corinth, and also a whole series of questions.
- And as we examine and we see what has happened in the time in Corinth, since Paul has left, we discover that this is a church that has significant difficulty and significant problems.
- Now I'm not going to go through every single one of them, you can see in chapter 1, at verse 12 and onwards, that the church has divided into factions, some following Paul, some Apollos, some following Peter, Cephas, some following Christ.
- [ 3 : 55 ] And then comes the great statement, is Christ divided, was Paul crucified for you? Etc. And then there are various questions that he has to deal with.

And we discover that the church in Corinth, like every church, there is nothing different in a sense about the church in Corinth from our own church here this evening, that there are divisions, there are differences of opinions, and that there are particular problems in Corinth, hopefully they're not here in this particular church, but I have no idea, I don't know you well enough to be able to make any kind of judgment, and even if I did, I'm not sure that I would make a judgment.

For we find, for example, that in one part of the letter, he deals with a whole series of things on sexual immorality. Then he deals with questions about the resurrection, and then he deals very clearly with the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

And it seems that in each one of these things, the Corinthians had more or less gone their own way. They were making their own decisions about how to do things. And basically, they were making quite a mess of it.

And as we see throughout the letter, and it's quite a long letter, the first letter to the Corinthians, the church in Corinth, which Paul had established, is a church that is now having severe difficulty.

[ 5 : 22 ] And therefore, they have sent to him. We don't have the letter that they sent to Paul, but we can tell from the details throughout this letter, the various questions that they had sent to him.

And Paul is very clear as he speaks to the church. And chapter 2 is perhaps one of the clearest statements of Paul's ministry.

He begins by saying, When I came to you, brothers, I did not come proclaiming the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. Now, you will remember that Corinth at the time was one of the most sophisticated cities of ancient Greece, to the south of Athens, bordering on what eventually would become the canal, of course, the famous Corinthian canal.

And it was a city that was a cosmopolitan city. It received people, travelers, merchandise, from virtually all parts of the known world at that particular time.

And it was a center of idol worship. It was also a center of learning and a center of philosophy. And therefore, anyone who expected to make some kind of impression in the city of Corinth was expected to be someone who came, even as we saw when Paul was in Athens, someone who would come with some new kind of philosophy or come with lofty speech or wisdom, as Paul puts it here.

[ 6 : 55 ] But you notice that Paul immediately says, I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. That's the only thing that matters.

Paul is very clear that that is the central part of his message, to know Jesus Christ and him crucified. But he goes on and explains how he was.

I was with you in weakness and fear and much trembling, and my speech and message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

And he makes it very clear that the centrality of the gospel of Jesus Christ depends on the work of the Holy Spirit. Now, I know that you've been looking at the Holy Spirit in your meetings, in your Wednesday meetings.

I'm not sure if you've touched this part. I don't think so, so far. But here we see Paul's dependence on the Spirit, not on his own words of wisdom.

[ 8 : 09 ] And you see something else. I was with you in weakness and fear and much trembling. You might think that anyone who stands up to preach the word of God is someone who has confidence in his ability to do so, a certain amount of learning and a certain amount of wisdom.

But you would be very wrong in some cases. You would be very wrong indeed. In fact, very often, what you find is that men who were not particularly great scholars, although many were, very often were some of the most powerful preachers.

And that is something that you can see across history. Why was that? That was because we were not resting in the power of the wisdom of men, but with the power of God.

And we have to remember that Jesus himself told us at the very beginning, when he is speaking to the disciples, he says, without me, you can do nothing.

Without me, you can do nothing. But from then on, as he tells his disciples that he is preparing to leave, and something that they found so difficult to understand, he tells them in John 14 how everything that they do from now on will be through the power of the Spirit.

[ 9 : 37 ] I will send you another comforter, even the Holy Spirit. And it is through the power of the Spirit that every single person who stands up to preach the Word of God is able to do so.

In fact, it is through the power of the Spirit that every single person who understands anything about the Word of God is able to do so. And we see that, that he lays that out for us in verse 14.

The natural man, the natural person, does not accept the things of the Spirit of God for they are folly to him. They are ridiculous.

They are stupid. They are totally illogical. Some of them appear to be totally unrealistic. And some of them just don't make any sense to the natural man at all.

And Paul explains why he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. And you can only discern spiritually through the power of the Spirit.

[ 10 : 47 ] And this is then the theme that he is going to develop in the next few chapters. But beforehand, he explains, yet among the mature we impart wisdom, but it's not a wisdom of this age or the rulers of this age who are doomed to pass away.

The wisdom that we impart is eternal. It's permanent. It doesn't matter how many of us disappear from here. Whoever replaces us will impart exactly the same wisdom through the same Spirit.

And he says, we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God which God declared before the ages for our glory.

And that raises an interesting question. Well, if it's secret, how was it revealed to us? And if it's hidden, who brought it to light?

And he answers that question for us in verse 10. These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depth of God.

[ 11 : 56 ] And I want to have a try and have a look this evening at some of the deep things, some of the depth of God, and perhaps some of the mysteries connected with that.

And we have to say right at the beginning that there are certain things about God, and we'll come to look at them in more detail in a moment, that you and I cannot understand.

It is impossible for us to understand. If we understood everything about God by our own logic and our own reasoning, there would be no need for faith.

Because we could work it out by thinking about and reasoning about it. But that is not the case. There are things that we cannot understand, and yet we believe because the Word of God says so, and we believe them because of the faith that we have been given through the Holy Spirit.

Now that appears to many people a total contradiction. But we'll try and open this out a little bit more. How do, how has God revealed these things to us?

[ 13 : 19 ] Well, basically, he's revealed them in what we call two books. God's book of works and God's book of words.

Now, you may never have heard it put in those particular terms, but we'll have a closer look at it. What does God's book of works actually mean? God's book of works is a term that is used to refer to the creation, to everything that we see round about us, to the fact that the creation is something that speaks to us of the Creator.

There are many, many passages in Scripture that tell us that even if we were totally ignorant of God, that nevertheless we should come to some kind of understanding through the marvels of creation.

Someone put it like this. He said, that's one Bible. And he said, you can make an acronym of it like this. He said, it's basic instructions by living earth.

Basic instructions by living earth. And he said, that contrasts with God's book of words, which is the Bible, which you can make an acronym of as like this.

[ 14 : 44 ] It's basic instructions before leaving earth. And there's a sort of nice comparison between the two. One set, God's book of works, the creation, and everything involved in the creation.

God's basic instructions by living earth. As you look at the living earth around about you and everything involved in creation, you should be able to see the creator in it.

And then when you come to his book of words, you realise that you are given basic instructions there before leaving earth. These are two quite interesting terms and an interesting way of contrasting the two things.

Now, we could spend an enormous amount of time on God's book of works, on the creation. How does the creation show the deep things of God, the revelation of God?

We know that from scripture, of course, we could open out that man has been created in the image of God. And I'm not going here going into the controversies of creation and how it happened, etc.

[ 15 : 57 ] and all the rest of it. That's not the objective. The objective is to see very clearly that God in his works shows every single thing that he is capable of doing.

And as we see what God is capable of doing, that should then lead us to thinking, well, how do I get to know this creator, this God, in more detail?

And to do that, I then have to come to the words that God has revealed to us, God's book of words. That is the scriptures, what we call the Bible, the scriptures of the Old Testament and the scriptures of the New Testament.

The theologians used to say that if you wanted to know about God, that you had to read the Old Testament. And if you had to know about the Lord Jesus Christ, you had to read the New Testament.

But of course, that was a very simplistic way of putting it. Because the two things are interlocked. You can't understand one without the other. The two things fit together.

[ 17 : 12 ] What are the deep things that God's book of words that the Bible shows us? I'm going to give you a list of a few of them and then we'll see perhaps how many we can consider briefly.

Although each one of them would actually suffice for a series of sermons. Not one sermon, but a series of sermons. And perhaps the first thing that we need to look at are what we refer to as the attributes of God.

That's the theological word. Simply putting it the characteristics of God. What is God like? Now that is something that at times we find it so hard to get our head around.

How do you understand an eternal God? A God who always was, always will be, never changes, is exactly the same, and has always been there.

How can you and I, who are so rooted in the concept of time, get our head around that simple attribute? I say simple because the word is simple, the term is not.

[ 18 : 29 ] That simple attribute of God. Try getting your head around the glory of God.

What does the glory of God actually mean? You and I know from our catechism that our chief end is to glorify God.

But why does God need our glory or us to glorify him? Why does he need us to worship him?

Now I don't have answers to all of these questions. I'm merely putting them to you for you to think about them and to meditate on them. And some of you may have far better answers than any of the things I could come up with.

What is God's glory? What is meant by God's glory? We read so often throughout Scripture about the glory of God revealed to us through Jesus Christ.

[ 19 : 33 ] But there's more to it than that. This glory is eternal. It never changes. So we come up with a fascinating question. Why does God command us to worship him in order to glorify him?

It's not because he needs it but because we need it. We need it. We need to acknowledge God and we need to worship and we need to glorify him.

how can God be omnipotent and omnipresent all-powerful and in every place at the same time.

That's a mind-boggling thing to think about. God is here at the same time as he is present in in in Barbe he's present in Carly and he's present in Shanghai and Los Angeles and wherever it is on the earth he is present in every one of these places at the same time as well as being present on his throne in heaven.

How is that possible? How is that possible? Even in whatever advanced realm of quantum physics we go into in order to try and explain that we have no answer to that at all.

[ 20 : 59 ] How can God be omniscient? How can he know everything? Everything that would happen from the very beginning to everything that will happen at the very end.

and he reveals some of these things to us. And then when you and I come to meditate on God's holiness how do we compare our holiness which we are commanded be holy as I am holy how do you compare your holiness to God's holiness?

holiness that's a frightening thought because then we are told by one of the Old Testament prophets that our right all our righteousness is as filthy rags before God.

There are so many other attributes that we could think of and then we come into God's will how do we understand God's will?

It's connected with all his attributes we can work out very clearly that God's will seems to fall into two categories first of all we have his decretive will that is that he decrees what will actually happen and he makes it happen and we see that in the days of creation we see it for example in Egypt when Moses and the plagues and everything else that happens in Egypt that God makes these things happen but then when we come into God's permissive will where he allows things to happen that's where we have much more difficulty and this is where people will question this is where the logical rational human being says how can God allow the suffering that goes on in the world how can God allow war the extermination of races how can God allow all the bad things to happen well of course that is by his permissive will he allows them to happen sometimes you and I don't understand why these things happen

[ 23 : 31 ] I shouldn't say sometimes I should maybe say most of the time we don't understand why so many of these things happen but it's only when we look and analyse the course of history that we see that most of these things are due to man's inhumanity to man and God allows that to happen because it shows the depth of sin and depravity to which the human being can sink we're all so aware of that even in our own lifetimes all you have to do is look at the stories of the holocaust and or look at what happened in Cambodia during the time of the Khmer Rouge to see the depth of depravity that man can sink to in inflicting suffering on others but we don't actually have to look that far we see it in our own country how many times did we in the days of our famous empire and everything else did we exploit others and other countries for our own benefits we may argue of course that we gave them the gifts of learning and judicial systems and all the rest of it and we brought the scriptures to them but nevertheless our main motive in most cases was greed and human history is full of stories like that but God allows these things to happen he still uses them for his own purposes and that sometimes brings us into great difficulty but then we come perhaps to what is even more difficult to understand

God's plan for the world God's plan for you and I now we know of course that in the deep things of God that this plan is simply expressed as God saw that man would fall and therefore sent the Lord Jesus Christ to pay and to make atonement on the cross at Calvary so that everyone who comes and believes will find salvation in God through Jesus Christ God but then when you come to ask the question why was it necessary for such a plan to be put in place was there no other way in which God could have saved the world and then you perhaps come to an even more difficult question where did sin and evil come from why did

God permit sin and evil to come into the world now that's a very interesting question that you could spend hours on is God the author of sin Paul debates that in the letter to the Romans says God forbid quite the opposite where do we see the origins of sin it appears to be in heaven and some people get very uptight when one says that but it was in heaven that Satan rebelled and it was in heaven that he first through his own pride rebelled against God along with probably as most theologians think a third of the angels who rebelled with them why did God allow that to happen well very often you find the answer to a question by saying what if not if you ask the opposite question if that hadn't happened if Satan hadn't been permitted to sin and if sin hadn't entered the world would there have been any need for

Jesus Christ to have come and yet the plan that was made in all eternity had to be carried out we don't know if Satan sinned through his own free will the majority opinion on that is that he did that he had complete freedom in his own choice to do that and it is also the same with you and I how do you reconcile your own free will and you have a free will you have a free will in everything except your election that's a mystery and we'll come to that in a minute but then you see that that brings us then to look at God's sovereignty God is sovereign over all things at all times you and I think very often especially as we listen to the news nowadays we think that our world is out of control when we hear people rabbiting on about climate change and all the rest of it and yes of course these issues are important it seems that the world forgets that God is in control and it seems that the world forgets that these things have happened before we know very well geological evidence tells us very clearly that this particular ground on which we're sitting at this particular time that not so very long ago geologically speaking this whole area was covered by glaciers the whole area plenty of evidence of that round about you there must have been a time of severe climate change when these glaciers melted and now we come of course to the cycle in which we are at this time all of these things happen by God's permissive will and they happen through

God's sovereignty and when you and I sort of begin to get worried about what people are doing to our planet and all the rest of it it is right for us to be concerned but we should remember that God is in control that God is in control and that he has a purpose in allowing all these things what these purposes may be you and I may never see may never understand it may probably take years and years before we see if the world continues and so we go on as we look and how do we try and understand that the rational logical man who comes to this with the wisdom of the world cannot make any sense of it how can there possibly be a God who allows all these things to happen it's illogical it doesn't make sense how can there be a

[ 30 : 42 ] God who would send his own son to die so that people might come to faith to pay the price for sin it's illogical it doesn't make any sense and that brings us then to the mysteries that are involved in the deep things of God and there are mysteries and it is very good for you and I to often meditate upon these mysteries sometimes we will gain deeper understanding but sometimes we have to come to admit that there are things that we cannot understand how about the mystery of your own body science still medical science still hasn't fathomed out 100% how your body actually works now even with the wonderful advances made in technology and so on we have a greater understanding of that than we've ever had before world but that is really only on the physical side how many of us understand how the human mind works

I mean where is your mind that in itself is quite an interesting question that's been debated for many many times is the mind and the soul the same thing the soul that survives after death it is it fully compatible with the mind but you notice what Jesus what Paul says in verse 16 for who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him but we have the mind of Christ and yet you and I struggle so often between our mind and the mind of Christ and Paul speaks about that in more detail further on in the letter there are mysteries in God's book of creation God's book of nature that we find it almost impossible to understand we can speculate all we like about how the world has come into existence and we can speculate about how the balance of what the scientists call nowadays how the intricate balance of creation with all the planets and the sun holds everything properly in place so that there must have been a creator but the scientist has no answer as to why these things have been created he cannot answer that question because that is not a question that can be reasoned out by science the scientist has no answer to the question as to why is there no life being discovered on other planets will there ever be life discovered on other planets

I mean we could spend ages debating that particular question but it's quite interesting isn't it that even although we've managed to send a spacecraft to the very edge of our own galaxy and I don't know how many of you have ever seen the photograph taken by I think it's Voyager if I remember correctly Voyager 1 from Pluto looking backwards over the galaxy and within the photograph this tiny little pinprick of light of blue light is our earth the only planet on which the conditions are given for life to exist why is that scientists are amazed how why should it be that this particular planet is the only one that has life God's book of words gives us the answer to that in Genesis it tells us that we are created for a purpose and so we come into deeper things with this as well how do we come to think of the predestination and foreordaining that God does in everything that is to happen predestination is a question that many people find very difficult to get their heads around basically it means that

God has set out everything that will happen and it already happens according to his plan and the logical mind says to that well that means that we are simply robots carrying out pre-programmed instructions really if that were so then you would have no free will you would not be able to make decisions by yourself how do you put together your ability to make decisions for yourself with God's predestination and foreordaining of what is to happen try getting your head round that I'm challenging you this evening to think about the deep things of God and yet at every time when you come into the free will what do you get along with it you get the free offer of the gospel the free offer of the gospel which is completely unconditional to everyone who hears and who wishes to believe and who wishes to believe you see a lot of people can't get their heads around the process of election and very often say well if I'm elected then I'll believe that's not the way it works that's not the way it works you have the freedom to believe or not to believe it is your responsibility to seek to make your calling and election sure

I've spoken about election before and I'm not going to go into that in detail again yet but then if we come to shall I say in inverted commas simpler things how do you understand the incarnation of Jesus Christ the spirit overshadowed the virgin Mary I can't understand that I don't think any of you can either but yet by faith we believe it we believe that that is what happened but the logical rational mind says that's impossible that's impossible but then Gabriel reminds us with God all things are possible all things are possible and just to make it a little bit more complicated how do you understand the resurrection or you might say oh well yeah I understand the resurrection because the son of God had the power to be resurrected not to resurrect himself but to be resurrected but then how do you understand your own resurrection when you come and the

[ 38 : 20 ] God's book of words tells us so clearly that eventually when he comes again you will be resurrected not just your soul and your mind but your body will actually be resurrected people can't get their heads around that and yet to the Christian to the believer that is one of the basic things that he holds on to that's one of the main things that he looks forward to the resurrection of the body to be united body and soul in Christ and how do you understand what that means to be in Christ it's a phrase that Paul uses all the time it's a phrase that you hear from pulpits all the time to be in Christ how can you and I be in Christ well of course that is what happens through the process of regeneration through the process of adoption and through the process of sanctification you are united to

Christ you are in Christ and you are in Christ from the moment that you become a believer for the rest of eternity that's a comforting thought I don't understand it I can't understand it but yet I have to believe it because my faith depends upon it it's one of the central parts of my faith that I am united to Christ and then when I come to think of that even as a believer and I come to think of God's love God so loved the world and we all know the rest of the text how do I understand God's love for me for me as an individual the God who loved me so much that he sent his son to die on the cross at Calvary for me how do I understand that sacrifice

I can see as I read through the Old Testament and I see the mosaic system and I see the theme of blood running through the Old Testament I can see that it was necessary for the shedding of blood for an atonement to be made that pattern is laid out very clearly but how can I understand that it was necessary for the son of God for the only begotten son of God to carry out that sacrifice and what does begotten actually mean you know children have quite a perceptive way sometimes of asking questions I remember one child said to me once a child I mean about five six years old said to me does God have a wife I said no so how does he have a son then now you can see the child's logic at work of course because that is the model that we know that we're aware of but when you and



I come to think of what does it mean the only begotten son of God there are questions that come up immediately into our minds what does that actually mean somehow God generated a son does that mean that there was a time when God the father existed by himself without the son that's not what scripture teaches us it teaches us that all three have been there father son and holy spirit the three persons of the Godhead have been there since all eternity and I can hear you thinking wow we're getting into really heavy theological stuff here well yes and no it's only heavy when you start to think about the deep things of God and how the spirit begins to open them up to you you don't need to understand it to believe it in fact it doesn't really matter if you understand it or not as long as you believe it that's what really matters but it's when you've understood and believed or more correctly when you believed it is then the spirit begins to teach you to understand some of these things how do you understand the mystery of your own salvation why did you come to faith more than anyone else round about you never mind the election issue let's leave that aside what made you believe that perhaps the person beside you member of your own family didn't believe why were you brought to faith what was special about you that God loved you and brought you to faith and as you examine yourself your answer has to be absolutely nothing and yet when you compare yourself to others before you were brought to faith there are others perhaps you're here this evening you've been coming to church for years you've been reading God's word for years you've been praying perhaps for years and yet you still haven't come to faith and when we compare the way some are brought to faith everybody speaks of

Paul on the Damascus road experience and many people expect their own coming to faith to be such an experience it's not like that for most people quite the opposite it's a gentle gradual convincing of their need to come to faith of the fact that they are sinners and then to see the atoning work of Christ Christ and as you look at the atoning work of Christ in your own life think of the mystery of God's restraining grace how often he kept you out of mischief if I put it gently he kept you even before you were converted how often he kept you out of dangerous situations us and think also of his restoring grace how often he has restored you since then even in times of temptation as a believer perhaps in times of difficulty and persecution

[ 45 : 39 ] God's God's restraining and restoring grace is a mystery to all of us and yet it is evident in our daily life it's there every single minute it is God's restraining grace that keeps us from so many trials and difficulties of our own making and yet when you think of how that restraining grace acts in your mind can you control your thoughts the immediate answer that most philosophers and psychologists will say is of course you can can you how often does a thought pop into your head out of nowhere and very often it has nothing to do with what you've been thinking or speaking about and you know very often it happens even when you are worshipping when you're reading the word of

God even when you're listening to the word of God sometimes something goes on in your mind and it takes your attention away completely where did it come from where did it come from the word tells us so clearly that these are satanic attacks that that's the work of Satan and most people now of course in their logical human minds will Satan have they get a fun isn't it you know he's one of the superheroes in the Marvel comics Satan there's no such thing as Satan scripture makes it completely clear to us that Satan is constantly attacking the Lord's people you see there's no need for him to attack those who are not the Lord's it's the Lord's people that he constantly attacks why he wants to shake your faith he wants to test your faith you see that so clearly with job his faith being tested and your faith will also be tested in exactly the same way that's something that you and I have to be prepared for the testing of our faith and sometimes it can come in many different ways all you have to do is consider

I'll just finish with this all you have to do is consider how suffering comes into your own life and what the purpose of suffering actually is many people and even the Jews in Jesus' time saw suffering as something as God's punishment for sin for the sins that the individual had committed you remember the question for the blind man who sinned this man and his parents that he was born blind but very often God permits suffering among his people to take place to teach you certain lessons it's to bring you closer to God to teach you to depend on God sometimes to teach you humility these were lessons that Paul learned the hard way these were lessons that Peter had to learn the hard way as well and it's very hard for proud human beings such as we are to learn the lesson of humility but these are the things in the depth of the wisdom of

God that the spirit is teaching us the spirit is preparing us on the walk of the highway of holiness he is teaching us in our sanctification each individual sanctification is different each one of us are at a different place in the path of sanctification each one of us have different things to learn some are more mature as we read in the next chapter there how Paul says that he had to feed them some with milk because they couldn't bear the full meat of the world there are some who still need to be fed with milk at times others can take more advanced food but every one of us is fed according to our needs and that brings me very briefly to a final point and in all of that how do you and

I understand our union with Christ if you're a believer you're here this evening and you are united to Christ and you're united to Christ for all eternity how can you be united to Christ and yet you're sitting here in a church letting these words wash over you and perhaps baffling you and yet when you come to consider the deep things of God there is nothing more important than through the spirit to be united to Christ that's what the cross is all about these are interesting questions I'm quite sure that you're going to say to me afterwards yes but you didn't answer any of them you didn't really explain any of them well I don't have time if you want to stay till ten o'clock we'll start at the beginning and work through each one but you would have to work through each one separately but it is good for us to think about and to meditate on these things some of them have no answer some of them we will not understand the side of eternity and perhaps even in eternity we will not be given the answers but they won't really matter then anyway we won't be caring about these questions then our mind will be on other things on worship on the glory of God but perhaps this evening you're still struggling with your faith you're still struggling to work out what does this all mean well it comes down to as Paul is going to say to the

[ 52 : 17 ] Corinthians it comes down to a personal individual relationship with Jesus Christ it comes down to you recognizing that you have a need of a saviour that you are a sinner and remember in that sense sinner sinner simply means human there are many people who feel insulted when you say to them you're a sinner nowadays not not not any worse than him or her etc but you have to look at it from God's point of view it's how God sees what you are that matters not how you see it and when you realize how God sees you then you see the need you have for a saviour and yet the author of the gospel is there for everyone who will accept it the free offer of the gospel and notice the key word is will who will accept it if you haven't come to faith yet the only person you can blame is yourself it's because you don't will you don't want to there are other things that are more important and yet it's you and your own mind that has to work these things out may God in his mercy grant that you would be able to do that let us pray our father in heaven we thank you that we are able this evening to meditate somewhat on the deep things of the world on the deep things of

God that your spirit opens some of them up to us and yet other things are we pray that you would strengthen our faith that you would help us to understand more and more what we need to know and we are aware that you feed us and teach us as you see necessary we pray for any who are still struggling to come to faith that you would open their minds to see you in your beauty be with us and as we conclude our worship take us all to our homes and safety and pardon sin through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen Let us conclude then by singing a of God now may give a say or may in