

The Inner Life of the Leader

Paul wrote to the Corinthians “But we have the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2.16), and later in the same letter “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” (1 Cor 11.1). Apart from the day-to-day relationship with God which every Christian should be pursuing, in what particular ways does someone involved in church revitalisation need to cultivate the mind of Christ?

David Brown has been involved in church planting in France since 1976 and has planted three churches (two in Nancy and one in the Paris suburbs). After revitalising a church in central Paris, he is now planting a daughter church in an adjoining borough. For many years he was involved with GBU (Groupes Bibliques Universitaires), the French student movement affiliated with IFES, first as General Secretary, and then as chair of the board. He also chairs the Evangelism Commission of the French “National Council of Evangelicals” and teaches church revitalization at the Geneva Bible Institute. He is married to Mary, and they have four adult children and a growing number of grandchildren.

1 Corinthians

Chapter 1

Christ crucified: the power of God and the wisdom of God

Chapter 2

v1-5

- Paul is very aware of his weakness, counting on God’s intervention
- The centrality of the Gospel for living with true wisdom

The inner life of the Christian leader is the pursuit of wisdom! Especially today, with the omnipresence of the media, social networks, “fake news”, conspiracy theories, etc.

v6-10

- v6-7: Paul teaches wisdom among the mature
- v8: The world does not know this wisdom
- v9-11: The Holy Spirit in us reveals this wisdom
- v12-15: We need this wisdom to be able “understand what God has freely given us”. Understanding the Gospel, living by the Gospel, seeing all the consequences and implications of the Gospel. People who are not born again cannot comprehend all this.
- v16: Conclusion – “But we have the mind of Christ”.

- *We look at life through the “glasses” of the Gospel, for example*
 - *Man created in the image of God*
 - *The existence of sin*
 - *Redemption in Jesus*
 - *God leaves us in this world*
 - *We await the future glory*

- *The gospel = the wisdom of God*
It is the art of living according to God in this fallen world, thanks to our new status as Christians saved by Jesus.

Wisdom = deep understanding of what is involved in church revitalization.

- 1) A deep understanding of what is at stake, the basic two real issues.
 - a. How can we best prepare Christians for God’s glory in today’s world?
 - b. How can we reach out to non-Christians in the postmodern world?

- 2) A deep awareness that many of our traditions and practices are not the only way to do things and may not even be Scripturally based.
 - a. What does the Bible actually teach?
 - b. Is it possible to see how we can do things differently, to see something which doesn’t yet exist?

- 3) A deep understanding of what can prevent someone from having this sense of urgency.
 - a. A fear of what others might think, or even the fear of losing one’s job as a pastor.
 - b. A fear of failure, that things won’t really change.
 - c. The reaction to play it safe, to stay in one’s comfort zone.

- 4) A deep understanding of how to work towards revitalization of existing churches.
 - a. Understanding the radical nature of revitalization.
 - b. Understanding the need and the Biblical mandate, the vision, and the process.

- c. Understanding how to translate the concepts into a language that the church will understand.
- d. Understanding how to pursue revitalization without destroying good relationships and unity within the church.

Conclusion

The inner life is seeking to have the mind of Christ.