1 Corinthians 2:14-4:13 Pt. 1

Charles Feinberg

Announcer:

This is new standard for living featuring the Bible teaching ministry of Dr. Charles L. Feinberg and produced by Luckman Bible ministries. This cassette contains three messages covering First Corinthians chapter 2 verses 14 through Chapter 4 Verse 13. these messages are part of a series in which Dr. Feinberg covers the entire book of First Corinthians free printed study notes to accompany the series are available by writing to new standard for living post office box 5 9 9 9 Sunny Hills California 9 2 6 3 5 just before Dr. Feinberg comes to begin his talk let me take this moment to share with you some information about our distinguished teacher born into an orthodox Jewish home until his conversion to Christianity.

Dr. Feinberg was in training to become a rabbi he currently holds two earned doctorate degrees one in theology from Dallas Theological Seminary and the second a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University in archeology and Semitic languages. He has taught at Dallas Seminary and at Talbot Theological Seminary where for many years he served as dean of the faculty and where today as a tribute to his contribution a major campus building is named in his honor. Dr. Feinberg is active in many Christian organizations has been a pastor and was one of the translators of the New American Standard Bible, the version he will be using in this study. And now it gives us great pleasure to present our teacher Dr. Charles L. Feinberg.
Feinberg:

Friends in our study of First Corinthians we're in the second chapter. If you tuned in today for the first time you are thrice welcome. Make it a habit to listen in to our broadcast new standard for living using the new American standard version of the Bible put out by godly men under the Lockman Foundation. We have come in first Corinthians 2 in Paul's discussion of divisions in the church. He goes at it in a way that I'm sure no man would have thought of. He goes back to basics and he shows that we must first of all proceed on the basic foundational events of redemption history the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus. Burial and his resurrection. And then he proceeds on to all redeemed have been given the marvelous gift to the Spirit of God. And you see how this ultimately is going to be answering the question of divisions in the church.

He is putting aside all that would divide them and is emphasizing the unifying forces. What are the things that unite us? What are the things that bind us together? What are the things that harmonize us? And now when he brings in man's wisdom and God's wisdom and by contrast in the back of his mind don't you forget that he is thinking that it's going by man's wisdom that made them separate one from another. They were going according to things that appeal to them that seemed right to them. That seemed the most profitable and beneficial to them. He says no let's think God's thoughts after him. Now he comes again and again to tell us that the gospel is not a product. It's not a result of anything that man could think up or any aggregate of wise men. All the counsels of the philosophers of the whole world couldn't accomplish this. Spiritual things that have to be revealed by the Spirit of God and he does it not in words that we might think should be used but in that which is infinitely better namely spiritual words. It comes to verse 14 and may I say that from chapter 2:14 to.
Chapter 3 Verse 8. We have brought before our consideration three types of men or women or boys or girls. The natural, the spiritual, and the carnal, all men. That means everyone. All men and women in the world are somewhere in this threefold grouping and in verse fourteen. The natural man is defined first Corinthians two fourteen and may I plead with you friend very earnestly as a believer if you ever seek to deal with a soul about Christ an unsafe soul please I entreat you do not forget first Corinthians 2:14 it will make you not only more knowledgeable. It will make you more sympathetic. It will make you a more usable tool in the spirit of God to get to the heart of that man. What am I speaking of. Verse 14 but a natural man. That's man as he is naturally born as he comes into this world naturally a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God. He's been talking about how things have been revealed to us in verse ten revealed through the spirit and spiritual thoughts and spiritual words have been given to us by the Holy Spirit. They all add up that way. But he says don’t you think that that is the stock in trade as it were of the natural man. Oh no.

He can't accept he can't understand he can't assimilate. He can't make it his own. He can't incorporate into his thinking process the things of the Spirit of God. He's just the opposite. Why. Because they are foolishness to him you remember how he mentioned Christ crucified is a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks been foolishness to the world since. And it's also foolishness to the Jews. It's foolishness to all natural men, men in their natural state. He can't understand them even if he tries he can't because they're spiritually appraised spiritually discerned. Now my dear friends you may love a child and you may want to impart something to him you may want to tell the child see the child a year old or six months old. You may want to tell him about the tremendously serious condition that exists in the world. Why there is strife.
And there is violence and there is sin and ungodliness and all the rest of it and life is so precarious these are troublesome days.

You may go on and go down a whole list and speak for a whole hour to that little one. That child doesn't have the equipment to understand all those intricate things. Well that's a very poor in the last analysis. That's a very poor contrast to what we're talking about here. This natural man he's on the natural plain all he can go by are things that he knows by having a human spirit the spirit of man that's in him. He didn't have the holy that he does not have the wherewithal. How can a man go as rapidly as say a speeding car on a speedway? How can he go that fast if he is only on his two feet. Oh he may run he may run rapidly. He may be an Olympic runner and he may have broken a world record. But how can he ever keep up with a race where one is having an engine taking him at a terrific rate of speed. You say well he doesn't have the equipment naturally. Of course that's exactly it. They're foolishness to him he can't understand them because they are spiritually examined they're spiritually discerned they're spiritually laid hold of.

But he was spiritual. That's the saved man appraises all things exams all things he judges all things himself is understood or praised by no man for who has known the mind of the Lord that he should instruct Him. But we have the mind of Christ. I'm saying that we have here three groupings and all men and women in the universe on Earth are in this threefold grouping. The natural man is the one that is defined first in first Corinthians 2:14. He is I cannot repeat it too often he is the man as he was naturally born of his mother in his natural state unchanged and unregenerate the John 3:16 is the principle. Is the principle that which is born of the flesh is flesh that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit? It's not that you have to have a better obstetrician or a better hospital or better interns no.
If you're going to be born into this world no matter what equipment you have you are still going to have human physical natural life by being born physically and naturally. The same principle as you find in Genesis everything produced after its kind after its time the natural man is the psychical man. He lives in the realm of the soulish. He can't live in the realm of the spiritual because he's dead spiritually in trespasses and sins it is the soulish man. It's been well said that when God created man he was like a three story house. The lower story is the body. The second story was the soul the center of natural instincts and emotions. And the third story was the spirit and is the spirit the highest part of man with which he can commune and fellowship with God. That's why an animal, we don't talk about an animal being saved it can't be saved. That an animal has a soul but an animal doesn't have a spirit.

You never heard of an animal sitting up on its hind haunches and saying Oh Lord I thank thee for all thy gifts and for making me in such and such a way. No. He didn't have a spirit he has a soul. When man sinned remember that three story house when man sinned the House underwent a moral earthquake. What happened? The top story spirit fell into the basement and that has resulted in man's becoming pretty eminently a soulish or psychical man. The soul has taken the place of the spirit. Now everything is subjected to that. He wants that which will give him bodily pleasures and of things pleasures of the mind but totally apart from the spirit. Notice today how many men are trying to accomplish by psychology and psychiatry. The cure. Believe me is ultimately in the spiritual and in the spirit realm of man's need. No wonder men.

Like Dr. Henry link and others and managers have been calling for what they termed a return calling for what they term a return [inaudible] the natural man just has no equipment to discern spiritual things. He needs the spirit of God. But he's never received that spirit of God by being born again many know who have [inaudible] things of that world famous tremendous
preacher of God. Charles Haden Spurgeon of England when he was at the height of his fame as one of the greatest preaches the gospel many an unbeliever went to hear him. Many a one who rejected Christ? Delighted to listen to his messages on one occasion as a man known to be an infidel was returning from Spurgeon's meeting. He met a friend who said where you have been today. Well he said I've been to hear the great preacher Charles Spurgeon well his friend said you surprise me.

You don't believe a word he says the other answered. No I do not. But he does you know. I get a certain amount of satisfaction in listening to a man preach as though he really believed what he was preaching. You see the natural man hear it is quite evident in his answer. The natural man can appreciate earnestness sincerity fine diction poise but that doesn't mean he catches the inner spiritual content of the message. He doesn't have as I've been saying already. He just does not have sadly enough the equipment and the only way he can get it is from God. And God is willing to give it but he has not yet. The natural man who hasn't received the Spirit of God does not have what the Spirit of God alone can give. And so in verse 15 we read he who is spiritual appraises all things. He discerns things under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But other men don't understand or discern him they think him strange that he is out of the ordinary.

They think he's out of step. He's not really out of step. He's just marching to another drumbeat. Someone has said one of the old New England philosophers said if I do not seem to keep step with others it's because I'm listening to a different drumbeat. Thank God there is a commitment from God. There is something that he wants to reveal to us. And so Paul says for who has known the mind of the Lord that he should instruct him. No one knows the mind of the Lord no one knows enough to instruct the lord no one even more can follow the mind of the Lord unless he is given to the spirit of God who knows the things of God has the mind of the Lord. He
is deity and he says we have the mind of Christ we have the outlook of Christ why. Because bless God we have received the equipment through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now we continue on in the third chapter to look at the second man. We saw first of all the natural man. We did also see the spiritual man. Verse 14 talked about a natural man. Verse 15. He was spiritual. Who's that? Somebody who is goodie good. No. No holier than thou, sanctimonious, no he who is spiritual means the one who has the Holy Spirit indwelling him. Now we come to yet a third type of human being in the third chapter and I brethren could not speak to you as to spiritual men but as to men of flesh carnal men was the old translation as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink not solid food for you were not yet able to receive it indeed even now you are not yet able for you are all still fleshly. How do I know for since there are jealousy and strife among you? You're not you're not in the spiritual realm. Are you not fleshly? And are you not walking like mere men.

For when one says I'm appalled another I am of [inaudible] he's coming right in. he's zeroing in to the whole thing see how he's brought them all away from the basic truths of salvation to receiving and by receiving Christ as savior we become recipients of the indwelling spirit and by the spirit our whole outlook is changed the whole apparatus of our life is changed the whole perspective is changed our whole equipment has changed and now he says listen are you living as a spiritual men or as carnal you see the unsaved man can only be in one area. The natural man. A man who is saved can live either for the flesh or for the Spirit of God. So he does when one says I'm of Paul another I'm of Paulus. Are you not mere men verse four these are saved these that he says as men of flesh? He doesn't mean they're supposed to get out of their bodies soulless. These are saved but not far advanced.
They're actually friends in the babyhood stage of spiritual growth. They can stand verse two shows us they can stand very little in the way of spiritual food. They get indigestion in a hurry. Well I don't like those half hour preaching services. I don't like to go to prayer meeting. I don't want to keep my eyes closed that long. I like to go to a meeting where I can keep my eyes open. That's all baby talk baby talk. They can stand very little in the way of spiritual food. They're unable to assimilate their capacities for spiritual food is woefully and sadly unfortunately restricted. How often we hear people say and oh do they give themselves away. Oh my. They'll hear a message and they'll say he is too deep for me. They don't realize how that gives them away in their fleshly carnal outlook. And he says I'll just give you if you think I'm entirely out of line are you not still fleshly you have jealousy drive are you not fleshy.

Aren't you walking like me or men who would know the difference between you and unsaved people? We get the same kind of system we get the same kind of divisions we get the same kind of argumentation and confrontations among the unsaved. Well here are the proofs. I'm not just. Please don't think that I am faulting you just because I am in a bad mood today or out of sorts. Oh no here are the proofs and evidence of your carnality is told of Moody told it. That is a fable of an eagle jealous of another that could outfly him. He saw sportsman one day and he said to him I wish you'd bring down that eagle. The sportsman said he would if he only had some feathers to put into his arrow. So the eagle pulled one out of his wing. The arrow was shot but didn't quite reach the rival Eagle was flying too high. The envious Eagle kept pulling out more feathers until he lost so many he couldn't fly himself. And then the sportsman turned around and killed him. Friend, if you're jealous. Oh that works like a canker in the bones. It works like vinegar in the veins. If you're jealous.
The only man you can hurt is yourself. Number one. It's a clear mark no question about it. Jealousy is a clear mark of cardinality of fleshly outlook and fleshly living. Why should he have so and so when I don't have it? I am better than he is. Why should he be top of the post? Why should he be the top of the heap? Why should he be number one? I ought to be there no my friends. That kind of thing shows that you're living not in the spiritual realm but in a fleshly realm. For when one says I am of Paul and another I'm of apodous are you not mere men. Imagine a household being divided over the servants in the home. Does that home belong to the servants? Is the home that of these employees why. It's very idiotic. What then is appaloosa and what are Paul servants through whom you believe. Even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. Why then in heaven's name Paul says are you mentioning them? Why are you putting them up on a pedestal? Why are you underscoring them?

You're putting the searchlight on them as if they're worthy of all attention. And by so much don't you forget it. You're taking the attention away from the one who deserves all of it and all the adoration of the praise the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember all these are servants. When you go to the home of a friend and you find a maid there or a servant. Do you become taken up with the attire of that one or the way that person knows how to conduct himself or herself a servant there a maid or a man servant. No the home doesn't belong to that one and says he in verses six to eight. I planted, appaloosa watered but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who or the one who waters is anything but God who causes the growth. God is not minimizing through Paul. God is minimizing the work that we do in spreading the gospel and planting the seed and another watering the seed. No but don't get your eyes on secondary agent. It's ultimately God who causes the growth.
Don't tell me that when you plant and you water that by that you have ensured growth. A lot of people a lot of folk water and never get anything. It's God who causes that principle of growth in the world to take place even in the agricultural realm. How much more than in the spiritual then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters any but God who causes the growth. Now he who plants and he who waters are one. In other words they are in the same they may not be the same person but they are in the same category they can just do so much but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. And I want you to know that I've taken the time out to give this speaker because we are God's fellow workers.

You're God's field you're God's building. He is the one all-important the laborers in the ultimate are not the ones who ultimately bring about what is to be accomplished. They are not anything that Laborers are nothing as far as results are concerned. God is all and God is put before the ciphers. The amount is appreciable indeed if I write three zeros that's nothing. If I write six it's nothing. If I write nine it's nothing but if I put a one in front of those nine zeros my. And then if I put three more zeros my and leave that one ah it means something. God knows how to give each according to his own labor not in relation to others at all. So he summarizes the truth set forth in verses six to eight in verse nine. We are gods tilled. His cultivated his worked field. The word has been sown and fruitage has been realized for God. Oh wouldn't this do something to a church. I tell you. You long for it. So you want to see it realized on every hand. Why don't those folk realize that God is the increase? Don't magnifying the instrument.

Do you think that a great surgeon would appreciate it after he's done a successful piece of surgery? If the parents of the child that's been operated on would keep talking about the marvelous steel instruments and how they have been so effective and all the rest. Why what would the surgeons think he'd think they were. They had taken leave of their senses. That's not
the important factor. The important factor is the one who is using the instruments and it's God from start to finish. God is building the temple indicated later on in verse 16. This is the whole building the whole body of believers. My friends let's not be hacking away at the building. Let's not try to get some pneumatic drills and start hacking away at the foundations of a building or at the lower parts. You'll have the whole thing crashing down into a horrible destruction and not a thing of beauty. A building had a lot of thought go into it and a lot of work. And have you ever noticed have you ever thought of it in your city. If you ever get a building of any height say five stories 10 15.

Did you ever realize that in many cases practically every case where a building is put up of that height it can take the life of a person? Someone may have been injured and may even have been killed on a scaffold. Let's see. Let's see friends get the one who died. Christ Jesus the one who is keeping the building together the Spirit of God. Let's see to it that they are given the pre-eminent place. Let's realize that there has been sacrifice still into God's belly. Christ died that there might be not Paul not Paulus not Cephas not even Christ if he's taken as a party leader over against the other three. What a shameful degrading of Christ to put him on that level. That's not daring. Let's not dare do that. No spiritual man no man with spiritual discernment would ever do that. How do you know? Because the spirit of God who and indwells him and leads him in spiritual things would never lead a spiritual man. To equate anything that Christ did with what any man in the world at his best moment could do.

Oh friends let's realize there's really no good scriptural reason for anybody to want to see the body of Christ. That church with Christ purchased by his own blood as we read in Christ Paul says it Friends. Let's not see that riven asunder by all kinds of jealousies and envious intonations hear it.
Friends this may be getting close to home. We don't at all as you know intend to be hurtful or obnoxious but have you been in a church fight in a church division. Are you in the middle of it now oh by God's grace look at it from the spiritual viewpoint and desist.

Announcer:

Dr. Feinberg's next talk in this series from First Corinthians will begin in just a few moments. In the meantime I'd like to remind you that free credit study notes for this series and a catalogue of other Bible study cassette tapes are available again free by writing to new standard for living post-office box 5 9 9 9 Sunny Hills California 9 2 6 3 5. Now once again here is Dr. Feinberg with his next study in this verse by verse series from First Corinthians

Feinberg:

Friends. We are in the third chapter of First Corinthians and we've been through the first nine verses those of you that may be tuned in for the first time we're studying verse by verse in the Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, his first letter. It'd be a good idea if you have a moment just to call a friend and tell them to listen in also to the broadcast and make it a daily habit. In the ninth verse. The apostle Paul in dealing with a very sad situation of divisions a Church riven asunder doesn't give much of a testimony. It doesn't give a solid witness unified harmonious witness to the world dealing with that he's come to consider three types of men in the world a natural man a man as he's naturally born he doesn't know the things of the Spirit of God can't
comprehend the death of Christ he can't comprehend the equipment that a believer has to discern spiritual things and by implication of course if one understands that he can understand why men going according to natural ways would naturally be given to divisions and strife and conflict that shouldn't be the case of believers unless the believer is living in the realm of fleshly things just living according to the ways of the world living in a babyhood plane of spiritual growth.

And while Paul is speaking of that he shows that just as in an activity working in the field or building there has to be a plan there has to be one working with another. You can't be working at cross purposes with each other. You know that's the reason I believe they left off the building of the Tower of Babel in the eleventh chapter Genesis when that language when their language was confounded. One of them said would you please hand me that two by four and somebody threw a brick at him. Well you can't possibly build when you don't have any more harmony or any more unifying force than that. Now Paul has concluded by saying verse 9 for we are God's fellow workers you are God's field God's building marvelous thing that God is doing in building now in verse 10. According to the grace of God which was given to me as a wise master builder I laid a foundation and another is building upon it.

But let each man be careful how he builds upon he's carrying on this figure that as in a field one may sow one may plant one may water God is the ultimate source of return and of growth and of fruitage. Then building is the same way. It requires the masterful work of God and the oversight. And he says God's grace was given to me so that he laid a foundation not in folly not in wisdom but in wisdom as a wise master builder and he says another builds upon it. He's just trying to show that no one person no one minister has the whole field not everything in the world depends on that one person he has got to allow it. He has to come to grips with the idea that God as he is using me as he is directing me so he is directing others I must give them the
courtesy of believing that they too want the glory of God accomplished. And if we have that kind of attitude friends it will certainly erode any jealousy any friction any envy.

So he says another building about Let each man be careful how he builds upon it Paul in verse ten that is taking up the last figure of the buildings we mentioned the field now he takes up the last figure of the building. He says according to the grace of God which was given to me. He doesn't say now I am here in a special capacity and special authority. I know you can't do as good a job of building as I know he recognizes his debt to the grace of God. He laid a foundation. Now that's not granted to many today. Missionaries may have that privilege that is going in when they are not building on any other man's Foundation. Paul in Romans says he determined not to build on another man's foundation that was in the early years of the Christian faith. And I say missionaries they have that privilege.

Now if they go into a land or into a tribe or a people that have never heard the Gospel when they don't build on another man's Foundation. But it's all a matter requiring cooperation. We need desperately to see the overall picture. Everyone contributes his part to the finished product. Whether we like it or not and we should like it. It's God's plan. We should allow that God has a place for the ministry somewhere. Suppose someone can't do what you're doing. He can do something else. I'll never forget the incident comes to mind where Dry Scofield had been preaching and a powerful puppeteer and masterful preacher and a lady came up and she was just melted down in praise. Oh she said Dr. Schofield What a marvelous message. What a marvelous voice for God. She said Oh I just wish that I had that gift also. He looked at her and said my dear lady we're all part of the body. What would you think of a body that was all mouth? No you have to have other functions other organs.
And so he says Let each man be careful how he builds upon it. Every man is building.

Many years ago we're told there was a big contract being carried out a large building was erected hundreds of men were employed. There came a boy who wanted a job. Someone gave him something to do while he was bright eyed had no shoes his trousers were disreputable they were ragged. He was going about his job. One of the head contractors met him and said Come here what are you doing here. To that the boy said Didn't you know I was on the job. He was on the job. He had a sense of the importance of the thing he was doing whether he had shoes or the condition of his trousers or anything else whether he would notice or not. Didn't you know I was on the job? He was on the job had that sense of the worthwhileness of the thing with which he was occupied. And so we read on for no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid which is Christ Jesus. Paul says he as a master builder laid the foundation in other words he told the Corinthians they were a product under God of his ministry. And he says he laid a foundation because no other one. That is to last can be laid. And who is that foundation stone.

Not only the foundation stone but elsewhere in the word of God he is the top stone too. Who is that foundation stone and God help us all to realize it must be on him and no one else which is Christ Jesus its Jesus Christ. No need for laying this basic foundation again. His person and his work first Corinthians 2:2. I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ except Jesus Christ in Him crucified. So the person and work of Christ are the foundation for everything that's been laid. And far as that's concerned the initial work of bringing the gospel to Corinth is in a sense done too by Paul. As I've said already that type of preliminary missionary work is not afforded to everyone it may be in some countries and some places that have been long neglected.
He goes on now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold silver precious stones wood hay straw each man's work will become evident for the day will show it because it's to be revealed with fire and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work if any man's work which he has built upon it remains. He'll receive a reward if any man's work is burned up. He should suffer loss but he himself shall be saved yet so as through fire now he says in verse twelve. If a man builds there's a way of building you can either build with gold silver or precious stones very worthwhile or you could build with wood hay or straw. How do you know? You don't know. I don't know. With what we're building we are to do it as unto the Lord. But on examination day God will test every man's work and it will become evident the day to day is the day of the judgment seat of Christ of 2 Corinthians five examined on what the man has done.

Now I'm afraid friends that much of Christian service won't stand the test with what motive was it done. Here it is. If it is done from the right motive. The love of Christ constrains us compels us motivates us oh that will stand the test. Will it abide? Christ's scrutiny in the coming day. The man referred to in this verse is the Christian man. Verse twelve, now if any man builds that doesn't mean an unsaved man how can unsaved man build on the foundation in verse eleven tells us that the foundation is the Lord Jesus Christ he's got to know Christ if he's going to build in the proper way. So the Christian man and then it's tested every man's work is going to be tested on that day. That is the day of the [inaudible] the judgment seat of Christ. That's not hear me. It's not for salvation. Was settled at Calvary. We will never meet our sins again. No we're not coming into condemnation Romans 8 1.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. If we sit in this life God certainly puts us under discipline. We will suffer his judgment now may be a physical in the Corinthian church we're told in the eleventh chapter. Some among them are weak and sickly
and a number of them slept meant they were taking it out of this life just as Ananias and Sapphire were. There is yet beyond this a judgment seat of Christ not with reference to sin. But what kind of work you did was it worthwhile or was it useless. How could you know whether it's worthwhile or useless by the motive with which you did it? And remember this is not the great white throne judgment this is the judgment seat of Christ not for sin but rewards the great white throne judgment is the judgment after Christ reigns on earth for a thousand years at the end of the millennium is a great white throne judgment and there will be arrayed only the unsaved and they will be condemned on the basis of the fact that they have not received Christ the Savior.

There will be a book open the book of life to show their names not there that's why they have to be there if they're compelled to be the great white throne judgment. And then there are books open that contain their works and they were judged according to their works. The one who knew little will be beaten with few stripes the one who knew much will be beaten with many stripes. This I repeat first Corinthians 3:13 is not talking about the great white throne judgment but the judgment of Second Corinthians 5. Called the Bema. That's the Greek word coming from the Hebrew word Bama. And this is the judgment seat of Christ. He's going to reveal it. Each individual work it's going to be revealed in fire the testing fire revelation 1:14 Christ comes penetrating gaze. It's the testing fire of God's discernment.

Announcer:

The remainder of this talk is on the other side of this cassette. Please stop your cassette player now and turn the cassette over. It is not necessary to rewind or fast forward your cassette.

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