

3 - MINUTE SERMONS

1 Corinthians 2:9

"But, as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Many have used this verse to refer to heaven, the destiny of the faithful; or, at least to things which they perceive the faithful will have beyond this life. Further, the verse has been quoted at funerals to refer to heaven. Let us offer a brief examination of the verse. "As it is written" suggests it is quoted (though not verbatim) from some source previously written. These words appear to have been taken from Isaiah 64:4 (with perhaps a thought from Isaiah 65: 17). If this be true, they were first penned approximately 700 years before Paul quoted them. This would have Isaiah saying that, at some distant time from the making of this prophecy, those who love the Lord would enjoy things that had not been known or enjoyed before. Should we ask Isaiah what these "things" would be, we no doubt would be referred to such as Isaiah 2:1-4; 7:14; 53:1-12. From these we may learn of a Saviour who would shed His blood that man might have the forgiveness of sins, the Lord's authority being established and exalted, man being able to walk in the ways of the Lord, the establishment of His church or kingdom, His law and Word going forth from Jerusalem, and the "gospel of peace" being preached to all mankind. All these things, and more, would be included in the "things" of 1 Corinthians 2:9. Of course, these had not been known or enjoyed before.

Back to our text and its context. The first eight verses obviously deal with Christ and our relationship to Him in this life-right now! In verse 10 we learn that the "things" mentioned in verse 9, God had revealed to the apostles by His Spirit. In verse 13 we read, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; ... " Let us pause at this point and read Ephesians 3:1-5. Here we learn that the revelation had been a mystery; but, it no longer is a mystery since it has been revealed. We, also, learn that we can know these things that once was a mystery by reading what the apostles had to say. So, 1 Corinthians 2:9, is in harmony with Isaiah 64:4; and Ephesians 3:1-5 is in harmony with both.

The conclusion would be that 1 Corinthians 2:9, is not referring to heaven, but is referring to all those things which God designed for us to have and enjoy in our faithful walk with the Lord in this life. As we learn, believe, and obey His law-His word-His message-His Gospel which was to go forth from Jerusalem, we are told " .. continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel...the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel" (Colossians 1 :23,5).