



MILK OR MEAT

A S H A K E T H E N A T I O N S D E V O T I O N A L

And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able;

1 Corinthians 3:1-2

I am fascinated by the leadership of the Apostle Paul. When writing his first letter to the church in Corinth, he is so clear as to his process of communication. He is telling them exactly how he communicates and why he communicates the way that he does.

Corinth was a major cosmopolitan city at the time of Paul's writing. It was a place of wealth, earthly wisdom, idolatry and immorality. The new Christians were mostly Gentiles, and they were struggling with how to live a Christian life in the midst of such surrounding decay. Sound familiar? In this environment, if you wanted to impress people, you would present your ideas with 'wise and persuasive words' (**1 Corinthians 2:4**). But as Paul states, he did not come with this type of language. He actually came in 'weakness - with great fear and trembling, but he brought a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that their faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power' (**1 Corinthians 2:5**). This is a fascinating statement. **Paul, one of the most competent Jewish theologians of his time, could have overwhelmed them with wise and persuasive words, yet, it was with complete dependance on the Holy Spirit, that Paul presented the Gospel of Jesus Christ.** Alleluia!

He also had the discernment to determine what the listeners were ready to receive. The Corinthians were dealing with a life of compromise. They had the potential to be persuaded by the culture that there were other ways to salvation other than Jesus Christ alone. There was discord amongst the brethren, immorality in the church, and deception from the leadership. In this setting, Paul expresses his limitation in communication as the brethren were not ready to receive the deeper things of God.

When we live a life of spiritual compromise, our capacity is limited. We read and are satisfied with what we think is meat, but it is milk. **We are prideful and think that we are at a level where we can eat at the table, but are actually still with the nurse maid.** Living a life of compromise leads to our inability to be fed the meat. What is the meat? It is the revelation of the Holy Spirit of the deep things of God. 'We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us' (**1 Corinthians 2:12**).

I found that one of the biggest roadblocks to being able to receive the meat from the Lord's table is spiritual pride. When we think that we have made it, when we think that we are in a superior position, this dampens our ability to hear from the Holy Spirit. When we think we are farther along than we actually are on our spiritual journey, or, when we start to think that we have earned the gifts that God has so graciously bestowed upon us, what happens is that we lose our dependance on Jesus and start to move in our own strength. Look at Paul, as mentioned above - he had the degrees, he had the pedigree, yet he came before the Corinthians completely dependent on the Holy Spirit to convey the message that Jesus had given him - 'that we are God's temple and God's Spirit now lives in us' (**1 Corinthians 3:16**).

Brethren, we must stay close to Jesus. We must sit at His feet and allow the Holy Spirit to reveal His heart to us so that we may enjoy the deeper things of God - this posture is essential for the maturing believer. For, **'no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him'** (Isaiah 64:4).