

## The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians

### Be Mature in Your Thinking

1 Corinthians 14:20

#### 1. The Problem of **Childish Thinking**

The Corinthians were manifesting their spiritual immaturity in how they were handling the operation of the gifts of the Spirit in their congregation (1 Cor 12:14ff). Paul has already chided the Corinthians for their childishness when instead they ought to have already been mature (1 Cor. 3:1; Heb. 5:14). Someone in this state is able to be taught and corrected (cf. Prov. 9:4), but without an intentional correction, this naive foolishness can lead to ruin (cf. Prov. 6:32; 15:21; 18:2).

#### 2. The Importance of being **Innocent of Evil**

It is vital for the Christian to remain an innocent child in the ways of evil while becoming wise in the Lord. We can maintain innocence in regard to evil by mortifying a sinful desire for things of this world (Matt 6:19; 1 Thess 6:10) and by refraining to respond in kind to the wicked things we experience (1 Thess 5:15; 1 Pet. 3:9-12; cf. Phil 3:18-19). We are not to dwell upon those things which are evil or which lend themselves to evil (Job 31:1; Rom. 8:5-9) but instead to dwell on what is good (Phil 4:8-9; Col. 3:2).

#### 3. The Imperative for **Continuing Maturity**

All believers ought to grow in their spiritual understanding (cf. 1 Cor. 13:11) because spiritual maturity enables us to have wisdom to discern good from evil (cf. Heb. 5:14). The local church is one of the primary means of grace which God has given to accomplish this result in us (Eph 4:11-14; Heb. 10:24-25; cf. Prov. 18:1-2; Rom 12:3; 2 Cor. 10:12).