



July 12 – Perspective

Weekly Reading – Romans 16 – 1 Corinthians 4

This Week's Passage – 1 Corinthians 2:6-16

Main Point

The Holy Spirit enables believers to understand and live according to God's wisdom rather than the wisdom of the world.

Key Verse

1 Corinthians 2:16 – But we have the mind of Christ. (ESV)

Try to emphasize this verse throughout the lesson, building up to the Weekly Challenge to memorize the verse this week.

Life Group – The Flow

- 15 minutes – Conversation and relationship-building
 - 5 minutes – Looking back
 - 5 minutes – Introduction, Background, and Christ Connection
 - 30 minutes – Study and apply the Bible
 - 5 minutes – Application exercise
 - 10 minutes – Pray Through the Passage & Prayer Requests
 - 5 minutes – Conclusion
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Looking Back (5 min)



Use this time to celebrate obedience and encourage growth. Invite members to share how they sought to apply last week's challenge and what God taught them along the way. Focus on God's faithfulness and the progress He is making in our lives, not on perfect execution. Scan or click the QR code for last week's challenge.

Discuss one or more prompts:

- Were you able to intentionally encourage, serve, or care for someone this week? Tell us about it.
 - What made it easy or difficult to take the initiative?
 - How did the experience impact you or the person you cared for?
 - What did God teach you about loving others through action rather than intention?
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Introduction (5 min)

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Ask:

- Have you ever completely misunderstood a situation until someone gave you information you didn't have before?

Examples:

- Misreading a text message
- Jumping to conclusions
- Following incorrect directions
- Making a decision with incomplete information

Follow-Up:

- How did receiving the missing information change your perspective?

Say:

"Two people can look at the exact same situation and come to completely different conclusions because they are operating from different perspectives. In 1 Corinthians 2, Paul teaches that spiritual truth cannot be fully understood through human wisdom alone. God reveals His wisdom through the Holy Spirit."

Transition to Background:

“Before we examine Paul’s teaching about spiritual wisdom, let’s consider the culture in which these believers lived.”

Background

The Background and Christ Connection sections are designed to provide context and a gospel lens for the lesson. Feel free to summarize these sections rather than reading them word-for-word.

Corinth was one of the most influential cities in the Roman Empire. It was known for wealth, commerce, education, philosophy, and public debate. Many Corinthians valued eloquent speech, intellectual achievement, and worldly success. As a result, some believers were tempted to evaluate Christianity through the lens of human wisdom rather than God’s wisdom.

Throughout the opening chapters of 1 Corinthians, Paul challenged this mindset by reminding believers that God’s wisdom often appears foolish to the world, while the world’s wisdom ultimately falls short of understanding God’s truth.

Transition to Christ Connection:

“Understanding Corinth’s culture helps explain the problem Paul was addressing, but the solution is found in Christ. Before we study the passage, let’s consider how this text points us to Him.”

Christ Connection

Jesus Christ is the ultimate revelation of God’s wisdom. The world viewed His crucifixion as weakness and defeat, yet through the cross God accomplished His plan of salvation. Because Christ died and rose again, believers have received the Holy Spirit, who helps them understand God’s truth and view life through God’s perspective. Through Christ, we are not left to figure out spiritual reality on our own—we have been given the mind of Christ.

Transition to Passage 1:

“Paul begins by contrasting the wisdom of this world with the wisdom that comes from God.”

Study and Apply (30 min)

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says and how we can apply it in our lives this week.

Passage 1 – 1 Corinthians 2:6-10

READ THE PASSAGE – Have a volunteer read 1 Corinthians 2:6-10.

Wisdom from the Spirit

[6] Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away.

[7] But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.

[8] None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

[9] But, as it is written,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the heart of man imagined,
what God has prepared for those who love him”—

[10] these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. (ESV)

Commentary

Use the following commentary to prepare ahead of time. As you lead, feel free to summarize key insights rather than reading it word-for-word.

Verse 6.

In verse 6, Paul uses the first-person plural, we, including himself along with the Corinthian believers. The Christ-centered wisdom of which he spoke, therefore, applies to the whole church as well as to Paul. Christ-centered wisdom is for the mature. These were the ones open to God’s Spirit and thus were enabled by Him to comprehend God’s wisdom. (In 2:6, the mature is probably synonymous with “the saved.” Paul was contrasting saved and lost people, not discussing levels of spiritual maturity as in 3:1-4.)

Paul stressed that only believers would understand and benefit from God’s wisdom. The wisdom that Paul proclaimed was not a worldly wisdom, described here as a wisdom of this age, or of the rulers of this age, those who so strongly influence the thinking and behavior of worldly people. Those who subscribe to that kind of wisdom are coming to nothing, Paul said.

Verses 7-8.

Paul made four statements about God’s wisdom. First, it is a mystery. The word describes something that had been hidden but has been revealed (see Eph. 3:4-5; Col. 1:26-27).

Therefore, God's wisdom is wisdom once hidden from human reason that has been revealed in the Person and work of Jesus Christ "by His Spirit" (1 Cor. 2:10).

Second, God's wisdom was predestined before the ages. God determined this wisdom, now revealed in Christ, before creation. This mystery has always been and always will be God's plan for redeeming sinful human beings.

Third, God's wisdom is for our glory. God planned the revelation of redemption in Christ before time began. He reveals Christ in the current age. When Christ returns and is revealed as Judge and King, the completion of our salvation will result in our glory as we receive our resurrection bodies, equipped to live with God for eternity.

Fourth, God's wisdom is unknown by the rulers of this age. The truth about Jesus Christ is revealed only by the Spirit (v. 10); therefore, those religious, intellectual, and political rulers who placed their confidence only in this world's wisdom were not able to understand God's wisdom.

Verse 9.

This verse does not refer to the majestic and as yet unseen glories of heaven but to God's plan of salvation for lost sinners. Articulate speakers, profound philosophers, or intellectual scholars on their own cannot grasp God's plan to redeem people through Christ.

Verse 10.

The difference between those who "crucified the Lord of glory" (v. 8) and "the mature" (v. 6) is an understanding of God's wisdom, which is revealed only by the Spirit. He alone understands the deep things of God; He alone can give understanding of those things to others.

Guide Discussion

You do not need to cover every question. Use the questions that best help your group engage with the passage. I do encourage you to use the Reflective question to provide more engagement from your Life Group.

1. **Good for Students.** What is the difference between human wisdom and God's wisdom?
2. **Discuss.** What are some messages our culture constantly promotes that conflict with God's wisdom?
3. **Deeper Dive.** Why did God's plan of salvation seem foolish to so many people in Jesus' day?

4. ★ Reflective - write answers on an index card (these can be found in the resource cart). **Where are you most tempted to evaluate life according to the world's wisdom rather than God's truth?**

Teaching Insight

The Teaching Insight is intended to help you identify and emphasize the main truth of the passage. Consider using it as a brief summary after discussion or a way to clarify the lesson's central message if your group gets off track.

Say:

"The world's wisdom focuses on self, success, and personal achievement. God's wisdom points us toward dependence on Christ and submission to His purposes."

Transition to Passage 2:

"Paul now explains how believers are able to understand God's wisdom and apply it to everyday life."

Passage 2 - 1 Corinthians 2:11-16

READ THE PASSAGE - Have volunteers read 1 Corinthians 2:11-16.

[11] For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

[12] Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.

[13] And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

[14] The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

[15] The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one.

[16] "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ. (ESV)

Commentary

Verse 11.

Paul began this verse with "for", which introduces an elaboration of what he said in verse 10 about the Holy Spirit's role of revealing God's truths to us. Paul contended by analogy that the only one who knows what goes on inside a man is the spirit of the man that is in him, a way of describing one's self-consciousness. So, the only way for others actually to know what we are thinking is for us to reveal our thoughts to them. Similarly, the only person who knows God is God alone. The only way we can actually know anything about God's plans and purposes is for God to reveal them to us. He reveals truth to us through the Spirit

of God. In the context of chapter 2, the Holy Spirit has revealed to believers God's saving purpose in Christ.

Verse 12.

One aspect of the Spirit's role is to reveal to us believers what has been freely given to us by God. What has He graciously chosen on His own to give us? He has given us salvation in Jesus Christ. We have His full salvation the moment we receive Christ. Realizing and experiencing all the benefits and blessings of that salvation, however, is a learning process facilitated by the Holy Spirit.

Verse 13.

Paul was among those who had learned much from the Holy Spirit. He was explaining spiritual things to spiritual people who could understand because they also had the Holy Spirit to help them. Would you like to know what spiritual things Paul was teaching? Begin to read the New Testament letters God inspired him to write, asking God's Spirit to guide you into the truths revealed in them.

Verse 14.

The natural man is a term that describes all who are without Christ; the term is opposite of "spiritual people" (v. 13). People without Christ do not have the Holy Spirit to help them comprehend God's revealed truth. That is the reason they do not welcome what comes from God's Spirit. In other words, when presented with truth about God, they refuse to believe. They reject the gospel and all it implies as foolishness. Lost people simply are not able to know the truth of the gospel on their own, for that truth can only be evaluated or discerned as truth through the work of the Holy Spirit. In other words, people who reject the Spirit's work in their hearts cannot develop a way to discern God's truth.

Verses 15-16.

In vivid contrast to "the natural man" of verse 14, the spiritual person (the one with the Spirit) can evaluate everything and discern truth from error. This does not imply infallibility. When speaking of spiritual matters, however, the person with the Spirit is not subject to the one without the Spirit. In other words, unbelievers cannot render correct judgments about believers or about the validity of their faith in Christ.

Paul then included a quote from Isaiah 40:13. The rhetorical question demands the answer that no one has known the Lord's mind except the Lord Himself. Therefore, those with the Spirit of the Lord have the mind of Christ. The word translated mind means more than mere thoughts; it includes the idea of a mind-set or disposition.

Paul's concluding statement is significant for two reasons. First, knowing the mind of the Lord and having the mind of Christ are synonymous phrases for Paul. To know the mind of the Lord, one must have the Spirit. Thus, to have the Spirit is to have the mind of Christ. Secondly, Paul brought to conclusion his argument begun in verse 7. To understand the

wisdom of God is to possess the mind of Christ. Therefore, the Spirit is constantly revealing the mystery of God, namely, Christ and Him crucified.

Guide Discussion

1. **Good for Students.** What does it mean to have the mind of Christ?
2. **Discuss.** How does the Holy Spirit help believers understand God's truth?
3. **Deeper Dive.** What are some practical ways believers can cultivate spiritual discernment?
4. ★ **Reflective** - write answers on an index card (these can be found in the resource cart). What voice currently has the greatest influence on your thinking: God's Word, your feelings, the culture around you, or something else? (how much time do you spend in God's Word versus on your phone, watching TV, going to friends for advice, etc.)

Teaching Insight

Say:

"Spiritual maturity is not merely knowing more information. It is learning to view life, decisions, relationships, and circumstances through the lens of God's truth."

Transition into Application Exercise:

"Knowing God's truth is important, but spiritual wisdom becomes evident when it shapes the way we think and live. Let's take a moment to evaluate what is influencing our perspective most."

Application Exercise (5-7 min)

Perspective Audit

Time: 5-7 minutes

Supplies: Index Card - you can find them in the resource cart

Instructions

Ask members to privately evaluate the following influences:

- God's Word
- Prayer

- Social media
- News and current events
- Friends and family
- Entertainment
- Personal feelings
- Work or school culture

Then discuss:

- Which influence most shapes your thinking on a daily basis?
- Which influence should have more influence than it currently does?
- What practical step could you take this week to intentionally pursue God's perspective?

Transition into Pray Through the Passage:

“Paul reminds us that God has not left us to navigate life alone. Through His Spirit, He helps us understand His truth and see life through His perspective. Let’s respond by praying through the passage together.”

Pray through the Passage (10 min)

Led by the Prayer Champion:

Read the verse/passage, then read the prayer prompt out loud. Allow a few moments between prompts for reflection and prayer. Encourage members to personalize each prayer by filling in the blank with their own response.

Prompt 1 - Confession (can be silent)

1 Corinthians 2:12 - Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. (ESV)

- Lord, forgive me for relying on worldly wisdom instead of trusting You in the area of _____.

Prompt 2 - Gratitude (have people pray this prompt out loud)

1 Corinthians 2:10 - these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. (ESV)

- Lord, thank You for revealing Your truth to me through _____.

Prompt 3 - Response/Obedience (have people pray this prompt out loud)

1 Corinthians 2:16 – “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?”
But we have the mind of Christ. (ESV)

- Lord, help me approach _____ with the mind of Christ this week.

End the prayer prompt time and transition to the next section:

Prayer Requests, Praises, and Follow-Up

1. Take a few minutes to ask the group for updates from the previous week’s prayer requests. Encourage the group to celebrate answered prayers.
2. Next, identify specific needs that can be prayed for throughout this coming week. Encourage members to be vulnerable and open in their needs so members can better and more fully support each other in prayer and in tangible ways.
3. Record requests and praises, share them with the group during the week, and follow up on them at the next gathering.

Transition into Conclusion:

“The world constantly invites us to adopt its values and perspectives. Yet believers have been given something far greater: the Spirit of God and the mind of Christ.”

Conclusion (5 min)



Scan or click the QR code and share the link in your Life Group’s group chat (e.g. GroupMe, text or email thread, etc.) so they can see This Week’s Challenge. Encourage your group to keep these questions in mind, review/memorize the Key Verse during the week, and engage in the Year of Prayer reading plan this week.

Final Takeaway

After discussion concludes, read the takeaway statement:

Spiritual maturity grows as believers learn to view life through God’s perspective rather than the wisdom of the world.

This Week's Challenge

Act

Identify one area of life where you are tempted to rely on worldly wisdom rather than God's truth. Spend time this week intentionally replacing that perspective with what Scripture teaches.

Reflect

- What most influences my thinking each day?
- Where am I tempted to trust my own understanding instead of God's?
- How has God's perspective changed the way I view a situation in the past?
- What would it look like to approach this week with the mind of Christ?

Memorize

Review daily and/or memorize the **Key Verse** from this passage to remind yourself that believers have been given the mind of Christ through the Holy Spirit.

[1 Corinthians 2:16](#) - But we have the mind of Christ. (ESV)

Read

This week's reading is [1 Corinthians 5-9](#). You can access the Year of Prayer reading plan [here](#).

Prayer

Either pray something like the guide below, or invite someone in the group to close in prayer.

Father, thank You for not leaving us to rely on our own wisdom. Thank You for giving us Your Spirit, who helps us understand Your truth and walk in Your ways. Renew our minds, shape our perspectives, and help us view every circumstance, relationship, and decision through the lens of Your Word. Give us the humility to trust Your wisdom above our own and the courage to live according to Your truth. In Jesus' name, amen.