

# 1 CORINTHIANS

SEEING EVERY PART OF LIFE THROUGH THE GOSPEL

24 Jan 2021

Chapter 1:18-2:16

**Verse of the Day:**

*my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (1 Co 2:4-5).*

**Review:** Who, What, When, Where, Why?

**Christ the Wisdom and Power of God**

<sup>18</sup> For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup> For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

<sup>20</sup> Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup> For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup> For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, <sup>23</sup> *but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles*, <sup>24</sup> but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup> For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

<sup>26</sup> For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup> But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup> God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, <sup>29</sup> so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup> And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup> so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

**Proclaiming Christ Crucified**

**2** And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. <sup>2</sup> For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. <sup>3</sup> And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, <sup>4</sup> and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of

83% of non-religious adults in the U.S. believe that evangelism is religiously extreme<sup>1</sup>

“folly” – Alexamenos graffiti



“Alexamenos worships [his] God.”<sup>2</sup>

Why suffering? (He 9:22; 2 Cor 5:21)

Why did God choose to call ordinary people rather than those who might more easily impress the world?

e.g. 2 Cor 10:10

What reassurance does this passage offer to an evangelist?

<sup>1</sup> p. 23. *Spiritual Conversations in the Digital Age*. (2018). A Barna Report produced in partnership with Lutheran Hour Ministries

<sup>2</sup> Middendorf, M. P. (2009). [1 and 2 Corinthians](#). In R. Schuler (Ed.), *Called by the Gospel: An Introduction to the New Testament* (revised edition, Vol. 2, p. 154). Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock.

wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup> so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

### Wisdom from the Spirit

<sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. <sup>8</sup> None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. <sup>9</sup> 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”—

<sup>10</sup> these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

<sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. <sup>16</sup> “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

How does the crucifixion of Jesus show the failure of human thinking to understand God's plan?

How do vs 10-13 speak to the doctrine of inspiration? (c.f. v 16b & 1 Thess 2:13)

Why can't people come to faith or remain in faith without the work of the Holy Spirit? (also consider Eph 2:1 & 4-5; and John 3)

### Close by Singing: 526 You Are the Way; through You Alone



1 You are the way; through You a - lone Can  
2 You are the truth; Your Word a - lone True



we the Fa - ther find; In You, O Christ, has  
wis - dom can im - part; You on - ly can in -



God re - vealed His heart and will and mind.  
form the mind And pu - ri - fy the heart.

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**Pray:** You are the way, the truth, the life; grant us that way to know, that truth to keep, that life to win whose joys eternal flow (LSB 526 v4). Amen.