

1 CORINTHIANS 2:6–16, “TO THE CHURCH OF GOD”

⁶We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. ⁷No, we speak of God’s secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. ⁸None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹However, as it is written:

“No eye has seen,

no ear has heard,

no mind has conceived

what God has prepared for those who love him”^[a]—

¹⁰but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. ¹¹For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹²We 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. ¹³This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. ¹⁴The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man’s judgment:

¹⁶“For who has known the mind of the Lord

that he may instruct him?”^[b]

But we have the mind of Christ.

^[a] Isaiah 64:4; ^[b] Isaiah 40:13

Discussion Questions (Choose a manageable number to discuss)

1. How (v. 6) does the message of “Jesus Christ and him crucified” (2:2) run counter to “the wisdom of this age”?
Why (vv. 7, 14) is “the foolishness of what was preached” (1:21) a hidden, secret wisdom?
2. How (vv. 10, 12) may we be included among those mature enough to understand this wisdom?
3. We agree that the basic message of the cross is “the power of God” (1:18) to those who are being saved. But how is this substitutionary atonement for our sins at the core of “the deep things of God” (v. 10)?
4. What does the message of the cross tell us (v. 7) about God’s eternal, unchanging plan for human destiny?
5. Pastor Josh Moody pointed out that the message of the cross fleshes out the nature of the Trinity. Who (v. 7) does Paul say predetermined it?
What (v. 8) does Paul call the one who underwent the crucifixion?
Who (v. 10) has revealed the full meaning of the cross to us?
6. How could Christ’s crucifixion usher in *our* glory (v. 7)? (See also Romans 8:16–17.)
7. How (v. 13) does God use the words of Scripture to reveal his truth to us?
Why is expositional preaching the right *method* for conveying the spiritual *message*?
8. How does Paul’s citation (in v. 9) of Isaiah 64:4 differ from the prophet’s wording?
9. What personal pronouns are used before (2:1–5) and after (3:1–2) this section?
How about this section (see vv. 1–2, 10, 12–13, 16)?
Pastor Josh suggested that Paul is expressing an “apostolic *we*,” akin to the “royal *we*” once assumed by monarchs. Does this explain Paul’s freedom to insert into the Isaiah text what God had revealed to him as its ultimate thrust?