

Subject: Knowing and Living the Deep Things of God -- A Recap of Sunday's Message

Dear Church Family,

It was a joy to open God's word together this past Sunday, and I pray the message continues to work in your hearts throughout the week. I wanted to send along a brief recap to help you hold onto what we studied and carry it into your daily walk with Christ. As I noted, there is an extended treatment of the vast chasm between the natural and spiritual man. You can find the notes, along with other discipleship materials [[HERE](#)].

Summary: The sermon explored 1 Corinthians 2:6-16, where the Apostle Paul draws a sharp and sobering contrast between the wisdom of man and the wisdom of God. Just as the Corinthians were tempted to look beyond the gospel of Jesus Christ toward the attractive but empty philosophies of their day, we too face the constant pull of man-made wisdom, cultural influence, and false teaching. Paul's message -- and ours -- is that the deep things of God are revealed not through human intellect or worldly reasoning, but through the Holy Spirit alone. The natural man, governed by pride, instinct, and self-interest, cannot receive or discern what God has freely given to those who belong to Him. The spiritual man, indwelt by the Spirit and given the mind of Christ, is transformed, equipped, and called to live in a way that is radically different from the world around him. This passage calls every one of us to examine where our identity, our trust, and our wisdom are truly rooted.

Takeaways:

1. The gospel of Jesus Christ is sufficient. You do not need to look beyond or outside of Jesus and His word to live a victorious, eternal life. As the sermon reminded us, Jesus did not make knowing and walking with Him complicated -- it is just hard. The answer to that hardness is not a different or deeper gospel, but a deeper dependence on the One who has already given us everything we need.
2. The contrast between the natural man and the spiritual man is real and it is reflected in every area of life. From how we handle trials, to how we treat others, to where we place our trust, the difference between living by the flesh and living by the Spirit is not abstract -- it shows up in our daily choices, our relationships, and the fruit our lives produce.
3. Pride is the great enemy of spiritual growth. The Corinthians did not drift from the gospel by accident. They drifted because pride made man's wisdom feel more satisfying than God's. The same is true for us. The paradoxes of Scripture -- that strength is made perfect in weakness, that the last shall be first, that losing your life is the way to find it -- are not puzzles to be solved but invitations to surrender. Humility before Christ is not a one-time decision; it is a daily posture.

I want to encourage you this week to sit with the contrast Paul draws between the natural and spiritual man and ask yourself honestly which description more closely reflects your life right now. Not to bring condemnation, but to invite the Spirit to do His transforming work. The deep things of God are not hidden from you -- they have been freely given to all who belong to Christ.

As always, I am grateful to walk this road with you. If anything from Sunday's message stirred a question or a conversation you want to continue, please do not hesitate to reach out.

For His glory alone,

Pastor Jim

1 Corinthians 2:6-16

Knowing and Living the Deep Things of God

I. Introduction: Clear Choice with Clear Consequences

- A fool rejects the wisdom of God in favor of his own wisdom.
- Biblical paradoxes reveal the vast chasm between mans and Gods wisdom.

Additional Scripture References: Mt 16:25; 2 Cor 12:9; 1 Cor 1:27; Mt 20:26, 23:12; 2 Cor 8:9; Mt 5:3; 1 Cor 9:19; Jam 1:2; 1 Co 3:18; 1 Co 1:18; Phil 2:6–7

II. 1 Corinthians 2:6-13: Wisdom Hidden in Plain Sight

- What is God's glory and what of His glory does He share with His disciples?
- 5 major red flags of false teaching in our day
- Several of the major reasons why people reject the Jesus of the bible today include:

Additional Scripture References: Heb 1:3; Jn 17:22-23; 2 Cor 3:18, 4:6; Zech 12:10; Rev 1:7; Phil 2:9-11; Mk 7:1-13; Jn 16:13

III. 1 Corinthians 2:14-16: The Spirit of God Changes Everything

- The Spirit of God changes everything because He reveals the character, will, and glory of God.
- Consider the differences between the natural man and spiritual man as you count the cost of following Christ or not.
- The discipleship notes list 15 different ways the differences between the natural and spiritual man are worked out in our everyday living experiences.

IV. Closing: A Choice to be Made

Knowing and Living the Deep Things of God

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1 Corinthians 2:6-16

I. Introduction: Clear Choice With Clear Consequences

1. Despite having been radically saved and having their lives transformed, the Corinthians were in spiritual jeopardy as they had allowed and adopted teaching built upon the foundation of man's fallible wisdom rather than God's infallible wisdom.
2. As we transit the balance of chapter two, we go with Paul as he further plumbs the depth of God's wisdom in looking to cement their (and our) faith in Jesus. *However, among the great many similarities we share with the Corinthians, we are too often satisfied by science and other disciplines offering us an explanation of what we see and a way forward in our strength and wisdom.* The result is that mankind continually plays the fool in returning to kingdoms of our own making rather than trusting in the One whose kingdom shall have no end, King Jesus.
3. I think it helpful in preparing our hearts for this study if you will join me in considering a few of the many Biblical paradoxes revealing the vast chasm between man's and God's wisdom...*a chasm that, as Paul notes is contrasted in the lives of the spiritual man verses the natural man.*

For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. - Matthew 16:25, NKJV

"My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." - 2 Corinthians 12:9, NKJV

But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty - 1 Co 1:27, NKJV

...but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. - Matthew 20:26, NKJV

And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. - Matthew 23:12, NKJV

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. - 2 Corinthians 8:9, NKJV

“Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Matthew 5:3, NKJV

For though I am free from all *men*, I have made myself a servant to all,
- 1 Corinthians 9:19, NKJV

count it all joy when you fall into various trials, - James 1:2, NKJV

Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise.
- 1 Co 3:18, NKJV

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
- 1 Co 1:18, NKJV

Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. ⁷ Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave. – Philippians 2:6–7, NLT

And we haven't even considered the paradox of the cross which is life to some and death to others. *I hope this small set of paradoxes has humbled us that our hearts may hear and be changed by Paul's words today.*

4. One last framing for our study today comes in the form of understanding the difference between exploring with a map or with a personal guide:

A hiker can carry the most detailed topographical map of a mountain range and still get dangerously lost. The map contains accurate information, but it cannot warn him about the sudden weather change, the washed-out trail, or the better path around the ridge. A seasoned local guide, however, knows all of these things from experience and presence.

This illustrates the difference between merely possessing information about God and being indwelt by the Spirit of God. One gives you data. The other gives you wisdom for the actual terrain of life.

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II. 1 Corinthians 2:6-13: Wisdom Hidden in Plain Sight

1. The first thing we note is that the wisdom Paul shared is not for all people...it is only for the mature; the word here for maturity often translates as “perfect”, but the better sense here refers to those that have achieved their end...they had accepted Christ as Lord.
2. In taking a step back and surveying the scene with Paul, we see the mystery from eternity past was revealed AND received by those in the Corinthian church. They had been saved. They were being sanctified. But, these gifts from God, including His glory as we read in v3, was NOT enough for them.

This seems an opportune time to consider a couple of important things:

- (1) First, just what is God’s glory? Drawing from Hebrews 1:3, we can think of His glory as being the public display of His infinite beauty and worth.
- (2) Second, what of His glory does God give His children. Scripture tells us:
 - A. We, together, are saved and sanctified to unity in Him for His glory...Jn 17:22-23 says it this way:

²² And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³ *I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.* - Jn 17:22–23

B. As we read in 2 Cor 3:18, the believer is transformed by His glory:

¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

C. Finally, in our testimony we reflect His glory so others may see and know Christ through us. 2 Cor 4:6 says it this way:

⁶ For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

3. Of important note to us is that clueless experts inserted themselves in the Corinthian church – *that is, the gospel was a mystery to them, but that didn't stop them from seeking to corrupt the gospel and the church.* Is not the same true in our day with an innumerable number of so-called 'experts' seeking you through computers, phones, and tablets, along with hijacking denominations and building unbiblical movements bringing division into His church via one false gospel or another.

A. There are five (5) 'red flags' that come to mind that may help you in seeking Spirit-filled Biblical discernment regarding false teaching in our day. *Please keep in mind those most intent on deceiving you will be the most creative and effective in blinding you to their intentions* – remember time reveals most things and you are looking to see that both words AND actions line up with Scripture. *The 'red flags' are:*

- (1) Who has the final word? Is it Jesus through the plain reading of the word of God, or is it a modern-day apostle/prophet? (2 Ti 3:16-16; Acts 17:11);
 - (2) Who carries authority? Christ, through His word, or a specially appointed leader claiming anointing (and often, special knowledge)? (Eph 4:11-16; 1 Pet 5:1-3);
 - (3) If you follow the trail being laid out in someone's ministry claims and efforts, what is the mission? Is it to make disciples or take dominion?
 - (4) What produces spiritual maturity? Is it biblical truth and the development of Christlike character through discipleship – or is it through highly emotive supernatural experiences and power?
 - (5) Who gets the glory? Is it Jesus OR the apostle, prophet, ministry, self, or the movement?
4. From Scriptures such as **Zechariah 12:10**, **Revelation 1:7**, and **Philippians 2:9-11**, we know, just as Paul points to here in 1 Corinthians, if the rulers of the age had known Jesus was Lord, they would never have crucified Him.
- A. But they did teach against Him, they did reject Him and crucify Him, they did adopt a different gospel than Jesus', the one the disciples taught and purposed to live. Why? When the evidence was so visible and there was no need to live in a mystery, why did they willingly choose to reject Jesus?
- i. We learn some of the reasons why they (and we) reject Jesus from **Mark 7:1-13**, where we read they loved their traditions more than they loved God. They most wanted and already had influence, power, esteem, and fame, so why should-or-would they submit to God.

In addition to loving darkness more than light (Jn 3:19-20), outside of Christ's influence in our lives, people reject Jesus because of pride (James 4:6), desiring righteousness on their terms (Ro 10:3), blinded by Satan (2 Cor 4:4), the cost of following Christ is deemed to great (Mk 8:34), wanting to fit in (Jn 12:42-43), the love the things of this world (2 Tim 4:10), and as we have studied in 1 Corinthians, they value man-wisdom over God's wisdom. All these reasons, and more, because they give us power and control...because they make us feel good about ourselves...because they give us what our sin-stained hearts want most...and, because they place us in authority rather than Jesus.

For these and other reasons, in their pride, the Corinthians decided to look for a gospel with deeper meaning than what Paul had taught them. The gospel of Jesus Christ wasn't enough...imagine thinking that Jesus was God and yet His forgiveness, salvation, hope, grace, compassion, mercy, and love were NOT enough...imagine knowing that what they knew was only possible through the Spirit of God revealing these truths to the spirit of man and they were looking for something more.

- ii. May I give you a word of encouragement? You don't need to look beyond or outside of Jesus and His word, the Bible, to live a victorious, eternal life. Jesus did NOT make knowing and walking with Him complicated, it's just hard. Oh, but I pray that you, like me, have counted the cost and come to the conclusion that no matter what it costs, as for me and my family, we will follow the Lord.

- 5. In verses 12-13, we read, "Corinthian, you were forgiven, set-free, and redeemed into relationship with God...not by the power and wisdom of man, but by the GIFT of God." John 16:13 says it this way:

However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak and He will tell you the things to come.
- John 16:13

A. Jesus' words cut to the undeniable deep things of God...it is an absolute spiritual truth the Christ-follower is indwelt by the Spirit and set free by the power and wisdom of God Himself. It is this truth Paul is again using to set the Corinthians (and Aikenites) free from the false gospels always warring against Christ.

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III. 1 Corinthians 2:14-16: The Spirit of God Changes Everything

1. The Spirit of God changes everything because He reveals the character, will, and glory of God. He convicts the world of our sin and separation from God and then continually guides us ever deeper into relationship with Christ. Paul closes out his thought here in drawing a clear contrast between the natural and spiritual man. Before getting into some of the ways this difference works itself out in our lives, let's paint the picture of the radical contrast he is getting at:
 - A. The natural man/woman finds his/her identity in their sinful selves and broken world. This person is governed by ever-changing human reason and instinct with themselves placed at the center of all things for their own benefit and glory. The emphasis with this person is their wants and desires, their power and plans, their wisdom and understanding, what they can get/take from this life, and who/what is to blame when things don't go their way.
 - B. The spiritual man/woman finds his/her identity in their holy, righteous, and good Savior, Jesus Christ, the sovereign One. This person is indwelt by and given the mind of Christ by the Holy Spirit. They are given a new heart and transformed mind that Jesus plan, purpose, and will govern their lives as they rightly seek to obey, please, and worship Him. Rather than takers for themselves, the spiritual man/woman becomes a

sacrificial giver of love, service, hope, and so much more as they become increasingly Christ-like. In great contrast to the natural man, in the midst of life trials, the spiritual man looks inward and asks “What is God revealing to or about me? And what does He desire I do with the lessons He is giving?”

While we don’t have time to get into them today, in my notes I have offered 15 different ways this radical contrast works itself out in our lives.

- i. Let’s consider some of the ways this radical contrast works itself out in our lives:
 - The natural man has NO discernment regarding spiritual matters while the spiritual man has God-given spiritual discernment (1 Cor 2:14-14; Heb 5:14);
 - The natural man suppresses God’s truth, while the spiritual man lives in His truth (Rom 1:18-23; 3 John 3-4, 1 Jn 1:6-7);
 - The natural man is hostile to the things of God while the spiritual man’s is surrendered the Spirit with a life marked by peace with God (Romans 8:5-8);
 - The natural man is self-righteous in seeing others and circumstances as robbing them of what is right, good, and desired while the spiritual man knows his hurts and problems begin with him/herself (Jer 17:9; James 4:1-2);
 - The natural man follows instincts, while the spiritual man follows TRUTH in processing the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:15-16);
 - The natural man says it’s my wisdom and strength, while the spiritual man will settle for nothing less than God’s wisdom and strength. (1 Cor 1:18-25, 3:18-20; 1 Cor 2:6-13; Jam 1:5);

- The natural man cannot please God while the spiritual man does please God. (Romans 8:7-8; Rom 12:1-2, Gal 2:20);
- The natural man is ruled by flesh (his old nature) while the spiritual man is ruled by God (his new nature) (Eph 4:22-24, Col 3:5-14);
- The natural man is dead in sin while the spiritual man is alive in Christ (Eph 2:1-6; Col 2:13);
- The natural man produces the fruit of flesh while the spiritual man produces the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:19-23);
- The natural man is marked by pride while the spiritual man is marked by humility (Prov 16:18; James 4:6, 10; Phil 2:3-8);
- The natural man trusts himself (and other men) while the spiritual man trusts God (Prov 3:5-6, 14:12; 2 Cor 5:7);
- The natural man is driven by fear and anxiety while the spiritual man lays his fears at the feet of Christ (Mt 6:25-32, Phil 6:6-7, 1 Pet 5:7);
- The natural man seeks recognition and status while the spiritual man seeks to serve others (Mt 23:5-7, Mk 10:42-45; Phil 2:4-7); and finally
- The natural man's life ends with death, while the spiritual man's abundant-life-in-Christ never ends, but just keeps on getting better as he/she becomes increasingly Christ-like.

2. Let's remember the context here. [The Corinthians are rejecting and/or adding to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.](#) And they are doing so

based on man-wisdom that seems attractive to them. So, Paul in continuing to draw their attention to the vast chasm between man and God that their wisdom, hope, and salvation (the deep things of God) may rest solely in the person of Jesus Christ.

And despite his powerful words of God's truth to this point he is still NOT done. Why? Because their (and our) identity is not fully in Christ with our pride (fed by the enemy and the world) constantly at war with Jesus.

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IV. Closing: A Choice to be Made

1. God wanted the Corinthians and the Aikenites to know Him. He wants to share the mystery of the deep things of this life...the gospel of Jesus Christ. God wants to give you the mind of Christ and His wisdom. And so He has made the way...if you surrender your life to Christ He will give you all of these and so much more. If you don't, He won't...And you will live the life of a fool in your separation from Christ.
2. Under the header of giving our life ever more fully to Christ, we know it is NOT complicated, but it is hard. This is exactly why you need the power of the Holy Spirit, the word of God, and other Godly men and women in your life. To not only set us on the right path, but to offer us wisdom and insights as to the practices in our daily and weekly rhythm leading us deeper still in Christ.

5-Day Devotional

1 Corinthians 2:6-16

Knowing and Living the Deep Things of God

Day 1: The Wisdom That the World Cannot See

Reading: 1 Cor 2:6-9

Devotional: The world offers countless explanations for how life works and how to move forward in human strength. Yet Paul reminds us that God's wisdom operates on an entirely different plane, one hidden from the rulers and experts of every age. The mystery of the gospel was not concealed because God was withholding something. It was concealed because human pride was never willing to receive it on God's terms. The cross looked like foolishness. It looked like weakness. And yet it was the very power of God unto salvation.

Today, ask yourself where you have been tempted to seek explanations and solutions from the wisdom of this age rather than from the One whose kingdom shall have no end. In what area of your life are you currently trusting human reasoning over the revealed wisdom of God? What would it look like to surrender that area fully to Christ today? Identify one decision you are facing this week. Before consulting any other source, bring it to God in prayer and ask Him to grant you His wisdom rather than defaulting to your own understanding.

Day 2: The Spirit Reveals What the Eye Cannot See

Reading: 1 Cor 2:10-13; Jn 16:13

Devotional: Paul makes an extraordinary claim in this passage. The Spirit of God searches the deep things of God and then reveals those things to the believer. This is not a privilege reserved for theologians or church leaders. It is the inheritance of every person who has surrendered their life to Jesus Christ. The Spirit who dwells within you is the very Spirit who knows the mind of God. He guides you into truth not because you are wise enough to find it, but because God is gracious enough to give it.

You do not need to look beyond or outside of Jesus and His word to live a victorious, eternal life. The deep things of God are not hidden from you. They are being revealed to you daily through the Spirit who lives within you. Are you regularly creating space to hear from the Holy Spirit through Scripture and prayer? What distractions or competing voices have been drowning out His voice in your life? Set aside fifteen minutes today in complete silence with your Bible open. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your reading and to reveal something specific about the character and will of God that you need to receive today.

Day 3: The Natural Man and the Spiritual Man

Reading: 1 Co 2:14-16; Ro 8:5-8; Gal 5:19-23

Devotional: Paul draws a sharp and unavoidable line between two ways of living. The natural man places himself at the center of all things, governed by instinct, pride, and the desire for control. The spiritual man places Christ at the center, governed by the indwelling Spirit, a transformed mind, and a surrendered will. The contrast is not merely theological. It is intensely practical. It shows up in how you respond when life does not go your way, in whether you look outward to assign blame or inward to ask what God is revealing about you, in whether you produce the fruit of the flesh or the fruit of the Spirit. The question is not which of these two men exists within you. The question is which one you are feeding.

When trials come, is your first instinct to look outward and assign blame, or inward and ask what God is teaching you? What does your honest answer reveal about which nature is currently governing your life? Review the list of fruits of the Spirit described in Galatians 5:22-23, where Paul describes the qualities the Spirit produces in a believer's life. Choose one fruit that you feel is least evident in your life right now and pray specifically for the Spirit to cultivate it in you this week.

Day 4: The Paradox of God's Kingdom

Reading: Mt 16:25; 2 Co 12:9; Phil 2:6-11; Mt 5:3

UB: God's kingdom operates by principles that are fundamentally offensive to human pride. Losing your life is how you find it. Weakness is where strength is made perfect. Poverty of spirit is the entrance into the kingdom of heaven. The One who was rich became poor so that you might become rich. Every instinct of the natural man recoils from these truths because they strip away the very things pride holds most dear: control, status, self-sufficiency, and recognition. But these paradoxes are not puzzles to be solved. They are invitations to be accepted. Each one is a doorway into a deeper experience of Christ, available only to those willing to walk through it on His terms rather than their own.

Which of the paradoxes of God's kingdom do you find most difficult to embrace in your daily life? What does your resistance to it reveal about where your trust is still rooted in yourself rather than in Christ? Choose one of the paradoxes from today's reading and write it out by hand. Place it somewhere visible throughout your day as a reminder that God's ways are higher than your ways, and that His upside-down kingdom is the only one that will stand forever.

Day 5: The Mind of Christ and the Life That Never Ends

Reading: 1 Co 2:16; Ro 12:1-2; Eph 4:22-24; Col 3:5-14

Devotional: Paul closes this passage with one of the most staggering declarations in all of Scripture. The spiritual man has the mind of Christ. Not a partial understanding. Not a distant approximation. The mind of Christ. This is the inheritance of every believer, made possible not by human effort or religious achievement, but by the gracious gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit. And this mind, this renewed way of thinking and seeing and responding, is what transforms the natural man into the spiritual man over the course of a lifetime of surrender. The Corinthians were tempted to look beyond the gospel for something deeper. But there is nothing deeper than Christ. There is no wisdom higher, no hope more certain, no life more abundant than the one found in Him. And the life He gives does not end. It simply keeps getting better as you are made increasingly into His image.

In what ways has your mind been renewed since you surrendered your life to Christ? In what areas do you still find yourself thinking, responding, and reasoning like the natural man rather than the spiritual man? Commit this week to a specific and consistent practice of renewing your mind through the word of God. Whether that means daily Scripture reading, memorization, or meditation, choose a practice and protect the time for it. Your transformation depends not on a single decision but on the daily, faithful renewal of your mind in Christ.

Small Group Study Guide

1 Corinthians 2:6-16

Knowing and Living the Deep Things of God

Opening Prayer: Pray that the Lord would open your eyes to see and understand His word as you discuss the sermon.

Key Takeaways: Query the group for takeaways first...you may stay with one or more of those.

1. God's wisdom is not man's wisdom. The paradoxes of Scripture reveal a vast chasm between how God operates and how the natural man thinks. What appears foolish to the world is the very power and wisdom of God.
2. The deep things of God are hidden from the natural man but revealed by the Spirit. The gospel of Jesus Christ is not discovered through human intellect or tradition. It is received as a gift, revealed by the Holy Spirit to those who have surrendered their lives to Christ.
3. The natural man and the spiritual man live in radical contrast. Every area of life, from how we handle trials to how we seek identity and purpose, looks fundamentally different depending on whether a person is governed by their old nature or by the Spirit of God.
4. The Corinthian error is our error. Like the Corinthians, we are tempted to look beyond or add to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Man-wisdom, cultural pressure, pride, and the desire for control constantly pull us away from simple, costly, life-giving surrender to Christ.
5. The gospel is not complicated, but it is hard. Walking with Christ does not require intellectual complexity. It requires surrender, and that surrender is sustained through the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, and community with other believers.

Discussion Questions: Did the Holy Spirit prompt any questions with you? Start with those.

1. The sermon opened with a series of Biblical paradoxes, things like losing your life to find it, or becoming weak so that God's strength is made perfect. Which of those paradoxes struck you most personally, and why?
2. Have you ever found yourself, like the Corinthians, looking for something beyond or in addition to the gospel of Jesus Christ to satisfy a spiritual hunger? What did that look like in your life?

3. The pastor described God's glory as "the public display of His infinite beauty and worth," drawing from Hebrews 1:3. Scripture tells us that God shares aspects of His glory with His children, including transforming us, uniting us, and shining through us. In your own life, where do you most clearly see God's glory at work? Where do you find it hardest to reflect His glory to others?
4. The sermon listed several reasons why people reject Jesus, including pride, loving tradition more than God, being blinded by the enemy, and valuing man-wisdom over God's wisdom. Which of these do you think poses the greatest threat to the church today? Which poses the greatest threat to you personally?
5. Read 1 Corinthians 2:14-16 together as a group. The pastor drew a sharp contrast between the natural man and the spiritual man. Looking at the list of contrasts from the sermon, which contrast feels most convicting or most relevant to where you are right now in your walk with Christ?
6. The pastor said: "You don't need to look beyond or outside of Jesus and His word, the Bible to live a victorious, eternal life. Jesus did NOT make knowing and walking with Him complicated, it's just hard." What makes it hard for you? What has helped you stay the course when the cost of following Christ felt heavy?
7. The sermon pointed out that false teachers and corrupted gospels are not unique to the first century. How do you see this playing out in our current cultural moment? How do you personally guard yourself against false teaching?
8. The natural man is described as placing himself at the center of all things, while the spiritual man is governed by the will and purpose of Christ. In what specific areas of your life do you still find yourself operating more like the natural man than the spiritual man?
9. The pastor described the spiritual man's response to trials this way: in the midst of life trials, the spiritual man looks inward and asks "What is God revealing to or about me? And what does He desire I do with the lessons He is giving?" Think of a current trial or difficulty in your life. What might God be revealing to you through it?
10. The closing challenge was that knowing and walking with God requires the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, and other godly men and women. On a scale of one to ten, how engaged are you with each of those three right now? Where is the weakest link, and what would it look like to strengthen it?

Practical Applications: Query the group for applications first...you may explore one or more of those.

1. Identify your natural-man patterns. Pick two or three contrasts from the natural man versus spiritual man list in the sermon. Write them down and spend time this week in honest prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to show you where those patterns are still active in your life. Confess them and ask for transformation.
2. Audit what you are feeding yourself spiritually. Take an honest inventory of the voices you are listening to, whether through social media, podcasts, books, or other sources. Ask whether those voices are pointing you to the Jesus of the Bible or subtly pulling you toward a different gospel. Make any necessary changes.
3. Memorize a paradox. Choose one of the Biblical paradoxes from the introduction of the sermon and commit it to memory this week. Meditate on it daily and ask God to make its truth real in a specific situation you are facing.
4. Count the cost out loud. The pastor referenced counting the cost of following Christ and coming to a settled conclusion. If you have never done this formally, take time this week to write out what following Christ has cost you and what it has given you. Share what you are willing to with your group next time you meet.
5. Pray for someone living as the natural man. Identify one person in your life who is rejecting Jesus for one of the reasons discussed in the sermon. Commit to praying for that person by name every day this week, asking God to remove the blindness and open their heart to the gospel.

Closing Prayer Points:

- Ask God to move you from knowing the deep things of God in your mind to living them with your whole life.
- Pray for one another by name, lifting up specific struggles and surrenders that were shared during your discussion.
- Thank God that the gospel of Jesus Christ is enough, and that He has given us His Spirit, His Word, and one another to help us walk in it faithfully.

Discussion Questions

1 Corinthians 2:6-16

Knowing and Living the Deep Things of God

1. The sermon presents a series of Biblical paradoxes showing that God's wisdom is often the opposite of human wisdom -- which of these paradoxes challenges you most personally, and why do you think that particular tension is so difficult to embrace in your daily life?
2. Paul draws a sharp distinction between the natural man and the spiritual man -- in which areas of your life do you find yourself most often operating as the natural man rather than the spiritual man, and what do you believe is at the root of that struggle?
3. The Corinthians had been genuinely saved and transformed by the gospel, yet they still sought something beyond what Christ had given them -- in what ways do Christians today, perhaps even yourself, subtly communicate through their choices and pursuits that Jesus and His word are not enough?
4. The sermon notes that the rulers of the age rejected and crucified Jesus not out of ignorance alone, but because of pride, love of power, and a desire for self-governance -- how do those same motivations quietly operate in the hearts of believers today when they resist full surrender to Christ?
5. The pastor states that knowing and walking with Jesus is not complicated, but it is hard -- what is the difference between something being complicated and something being hard, and how does that distinction change the way you approach your walk with God?
6. Paul emphasizes that the deep things of God are revealed by the Holy Spirit to the spiritual person, not discovered through human intellect or effort -- how does this truth challenge the way our culture, and even the church, tends to approach theological understanding and spiritual growth?
7. The sermon warns that false teachers were present in Corinth inserting themselves into the church and corrupting the gospel, and draws a parallel to our own day -- what discernment practices should believers cultivate to guard themselves and their communities against false teaching?
8. The contrast between the natural man who blames others when life goes wrong and the spiritual man who asks what God is revealing about himself in trials is a striking one -- how does this inward-looking posture in suffering reflect the mind of Christ, and what makes it so difficult to maintain?

9. The sermon closes by stating that God wants to share the deep things of life with us and give us the mind of Christ, but that this only comes through surrendering our lives to Him -- what areas of your life have you not yet fully surrendered, and what do you believe is holding you back?
10. The Corinthians allowed their pride, fed by the enemy and the world, to remain at war with their identity in Christ even after salvation -- what spiritual disciplines, relationships, or habits do you believe are most essential for winning that ongoing battle and becoming increasingly Christ-like?

Dinner Conversation Starters
1 Corinthians 2:6-16
Knowing and Living the Deep Things of God

1. God's Wisdom vs. Our Wisdom

What is one situation where people often trust human wisdom more than God's wisdom? How can we learn to trust God more in that area?

2. The "Deep Things" of God

The sermon said that God reveals His truth to us through the Holy Spirit. What is something about God, Jesus, or the Bible that you want to understand more deeply?

3. Natural Man vs. Spiritual Man

Paul contrasts the natural person with the spiritual person. What are some signs that someone is living for themselves instead of living for Christ?

4. Following Jesus Is Simple, but Hard

The sermon said following Jesus is not complicated, but it is hard. What makes following Jesus difficult sometimes? What helps us keep going?

5. Living with the Mind of Christ

What would change in our family, school, work, or friendships if we asked, "What would honor Jesus here?" before making decisions?

Family Conversation Guide for Children & Early Teens

1 Corinthians 2:6-16

Knowing and Living the Deep Things of God

AGES 5-7: SIMPLIFYING THE MESSAGE APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Choosing Kindness When Others Are Unkind**: God's wisdom often looks different from what others do. Jesus teaches us to love, forgive, and serve.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) What should we do if we see someone being left out?
- (b) Is it always easy to be kind? Why not?
- (c) How did Jesus treat people who were lonely or ignored?

2. **Telling the Truth Even When It Is Hard**: The spiritual person lives by God's truth, not by fear or selfishness.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) Why is it sometimes hard to tell the truth?
- (b) What should we remember about God when we make a mistake?
- (c) How can our family show grace when someone tells the truth?

3. **Making Wise Choices with Screens**: Not everything that looks fun or exciting helps us follow Jesus.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) How do some shows or games make us feel afterward?
- (b) What kinds of things help our hearts feel peaceful and thankful?
- (c) If something makes us want to be mean, selfish, or scared, what should we do?

AGES 8-12: BUILDING UNDERSTANDING APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Standing for God's Wisdom in Friend Groups**: The natural person follows the crowd, but the spiritual person follows Christ.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) Why is it hard to speak up when a group is doing something wrong?
- (b) What are some ways to respond without being rude or prideful?
- (c) How can we ask God for courage before we face peer pressure?

2. **Finding Identity in Christ, Not Approval**: The spiritual person finds identity in Jesus, not in status, attention, or popularity.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) When do you feel pressure to impress other people?
- (b) What does God say is true about you?
- (c) How can remembering Jesus' love help when we feel left out?

3. **Practicing Wisdom Online**: God gives His people discernment to recognize what is true, helpful, and pleasing to Him.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) How can we tell if something online is wise or foolish?
- (b) What should we do if we see something that feels wrong or confusing?
- (c) Before we post or comment, how can we ask, “Does this honor Jesus?”

AGES 11-15: DEEPENING THE CONNECTION APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Resisting the Pressure to Build Your Own Kingdom**: Human wisdom says, “Live for yourself,” but God’s wisdom says, “Surrender to Christ.”

Discussion Questions:

- (a) What are some “kingdoms” people your age are tempted to build?
- (b) How can success, popularity, or attention become more important than Jesus?
- (c) What would it look like to surrender that area to Christ?

2. **Navigating Relationships with Spiritual Maturity**: The spiritual person becomes more Christlike—humble, loving, truthful, and sacrificial.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) When conflict happens, do you usually want to defend yourself, blame others, withdraw, or make peace?
- (b) How can humility change the way we handle drama?
- (c) What does it mean to love someone without letting them lead us away from Christ?

3. **Discernment in Digital Spaces and Social Media**: The natural person is shaped by the world; the spiritual person is shaped by God’s truth.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) What kind of content makes you more anxious, prideful, jealous, lustful, angry, or discontent?
- (b) Are there influencers or online voices you trust more than God’s Word?
- (c) What boundaries would help you follow Jesus more faithfully online?

Tips for Parents

- Be patient and listen: Give your child time to think and respond.
- Relate to everyday life: Use real-life examples and stories familiar to your child to make abstract concepts more tangible.
- Encourage questions: Let your son or daughter know it’s okay to ask questions, even if things don’t make sense right away.
- Share personal insights: Tell a personal story about a time you experienced these themes, adapting as needed for age appropriateness.

Family Conversation Guide for Gen Z

1 Corinthians 2:6-16

Knowing and Living the Deep Things of God

1. Choose God's Wisdom Over Group Pressure

Bible References: 1 Corinthians 2:12–13, Proverbs 3:5–6, Romans 12:2

Application: Do not let the group decide what is true, wise, or right. God's wisdom may not always be popular, but it is always good. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you recognize when a crowd is pulling you away from Christ.

Scenario: You are with friends and the conversation turns into gossip, mocking someone, or pressuring someone to compromise. Everyone laughs, and staying silent feels easier than standing out.

Discussion: When you are in a group, what makes it hard to follow God's wisdom instead of going along with everyone else?

2. Find Your Identity in Christ, Not Online Approval

Bible References: Galatians 2:20, John 17:22–23, 2 Corinthians 5:17

Application: Your worth is not measured by likes, comments, followers, appearance, relationship status, or being included. If you belong to Christ, your deepest identity is already secure in Him.

Scenario: You post something and keep checking to see who liked it. Or you feel crushed because friends posted pictures from an event you were not invited to.

Discussion: How does social media tempt you to measure your value by other people's attention?

3. Practice Spiritual Discernment with Influencers and Content

Bible References: 1 Corinthians 2:14–16, 1 John 4:1, Colossians 2:8

Application: Not every voice that sounds confident is speaking truth. Test online teaching, advice, trends, and "hot takes" by Scripture. Ask: Does this lead me toward Jesus, holiness, humility, and truth—or toward self, pride, confusion, and sin?

Scenario: An influencer says something spiritual like, “Follow your truth,” “The universe has a plan,” or “You don’t need religion to be a good person.” It sounds positive, but it does not point to Christ.

Discussion: What online voices are shaping the way you think about God, yourself, relationships, or morality?

4. Refuse the “My Truth” Mindset

Bible References: John 14:6, John 17:17, 1 Corinthians 3:18–19

Application: The sermon emphasized the difference between man’s wisdom and God’s wisdom. Gen Z is often told to “live your truth,” but Jesus does not call us to invent truth. He calls us to know Him, the Truth, and live by His Word.

Scenario: In class, online, or with friends, someone says, “That may be true for you, but it’s not true for me,” especially about sin, sexuality, identity, or salvation.

Discussion: How can you speak truth with humility and love when people believe truth is personal and changeable?

These points aim to empower Gen Z to live out their faith genuinely and courageously in various aspects of their daily lives, reflecting Biblical integrity, compassion, and steadfastness.