LESSON THREE

Built Different

"A Disciple Grows Up"

SCRIPTURE | 1 Corinthians 2:6–3:23

MEMORY VERSE

"I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought" (1 Corinthians 1:10).

MAIN IDEA OF THE TEXT

Built different: disciples mature by the wisdom of the Spirit, not the foolishness of the world.

DISCIPLESHIP RHYTHM

Daily Devotion

GROUP TIME

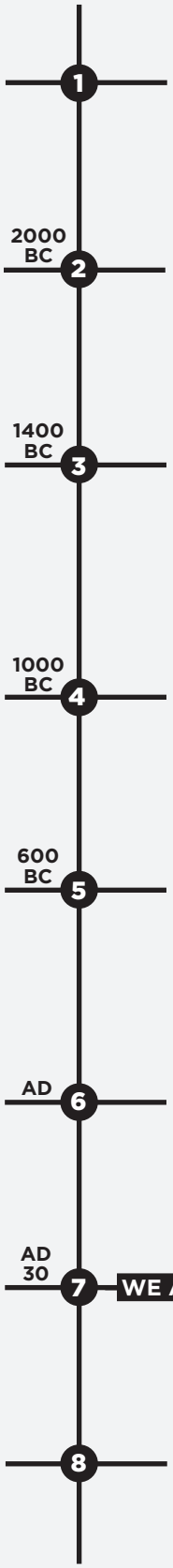
5 minutes	**Welcome**
5–10 minutes	**Attention Grabber**
10 minutes	**Story / Context**
25 minutes	**Discussion**
5–10 minutes	**Closing & Prayer**

PRAYER FOCUS

- **Parent Dedication** – Pray for the next generation of disciples (kids) being raised by parents to love and follow Jesus.
- **Serve Now** – Pray that people would respond to growing as disciples in the area of serving.

<u>BEGIN</u> this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of his Word, and asking the Holy Spirit to guide your study.

GOD'S STORY TIMELINE



1. God Creates the World and Promises a Rescuer *(Genesis 1-11)*
God created everything good and placed humans in a garden to live in close relationship with Him. But Adam and Eve chose to trust themselves instead of God, and sin entered the world. Relationships, creation, even our connection to God was broken. Yet even in judgment, God promised that one day, a descendant of Eve would crush the serpent and bring healing.
+This points to Jesus as the promised Rescuer who defeats sin, Satan, and death.

2. God Calls a Family and Makes a Promise *(Genesis 12-50)*
God chose a man named Abram (later Abraham) and gave a covenant to him: that he would have a large family, receive a land, and be a blessing to all nations. Though Abraham and his descendants were deeply flawed, God continued His promise through Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.
+This points to Jesus as the true offspring of Abraham, through whom all nations are fully blessed.

3. God Rescues His People and Forms a Redeemed Nation *(Exodus-Deuteronomy)*
Generations later, Abraham's descendants were enslaved in Egypt. God raised up Moses to rescue them from oppression and slavery. God called His people into a relationship with Himself. He made a covenant with them, gave them the law, and instructed them in worship. He was forming a people who would live differently and show the world what it looked like to belong to Him.
+This points to Jesus as the greater Moses, who rescues us from slavery to sin and writes God's law on our hearts.

4. God Gives a Home and Promises a King *(Joshua-2 Chronicles)*
God brought His people into the promised land under Joshua's leadership. Over time, they asked for a king like the other nations. It was a disaster. But God graciously gave them David, with whom he made another covenant: one of David's descendants would rule forever. Solomon built the temple, but after his death, the kingdom split into two and began spiraling into idolatry and injustice again.
+This points to Jesus as the forever King from David's line, who reigns with justice and peace.

5. God Removes His People and Reminds Them of His Promise *(Ezra-Nehemiah)*
Because of their rebellion, God allowed His people to be conquered and taken into exile. First, it was the Northern Kingdom, Israel (to Assyria), then the Southern Kingdom, Judah (to Babylon). The temple was destroyed, and the glory of the kingdom faded. Yet God continued to speak through the prophets, reminding the people of His promise to restore them, give them new hearts, and send a Rescuer.
+This points to Jesus as the one who brings the new covenant, restores hearts, and fulfills every prophecy.

6. God Sends His Son and Fulfills His Promise *(Matthew-John)*
At just the right time, God sent Jesus into the world—born of a virgin, fully God and fully man. He perfectly obeyed the law, pointed us to the Father, and laid down His life as a sacrifice for our sins. On the third day, He rose again, proving that He is the Savior, the King, and the fulfillment of every covenant promise God has ever made.
+Jesus is the center of the story—all of Scripture leads to Him.

7. God Sends His Spirit and Builds His Church *(Acts-Jude)*
After rising from the dead, Jesus ascended into heaven and sent the Holy Spirit to empower His followers. The early Church spread the good news of Jesus across the Roman world—planting churches, welcoming both Jews and Gentiles, and learning to live as God's new covenant people. Though imperfect, the Church carries Jesus' mission forward today.
+This points to Jesus as the risen King who gives the Spirit to dwell in us and send us on mission.

8. God Restores All Things and Dwells with His People *(Revelation)*
The story isn't over. One day Jesus will return to judge evil and make all things new. There will be a new heaven and new earth, where God's people from every tribe and nation will live with Him forever. There will be no more pain, no more death, and no more sin—just joy, justice, and unbroken peace.
+This points to Jesus as the one who brings the story to its perfect and eternal culmination.

1 GRAB THEIR ATTENTION

LEADER TIP

To grab your participants' attention, start your lesson by telling a story related to the lesson's main idea. We have provided you with three options in this section, but feel free to develop your own.

OPTION 1: THE LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA

The Library of Alexandria was one of the great centers of learning in the ancient world. Scholars gathered there to study philosophy, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, literature, and the history of nations. It became a symbol of human knowledge, a place people tried to collect and preserve the wisdom of the world.

But access to knowledge is not the same as becoming wise. A person can collect information, quote impressive thinkers, win arguments, and remain immature, jealous, proud, and divided. That was part of the Corinthians' problem. They valued wisdom, but Paul said there is a wisdom that comes from God and is revealed by the Spirit.

POTENTIAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- *What sources do people use to gain knowledge?*
- *What is the difference between knowing a lot and becoming wise?*

Transition Statement from Attention Grabber to Text:
A library, the internet, and ChatGPT can store information but cannot make a person mature. In 1 Corinthians 2:6–3:23, Paul showed that disciples grow up by receiving the wisdom God reveals through His Spirit. The world's wisdom leaves people divided and immature, but the Spirit develops disciples' maturity by teaching them to think with the mind of Christ.

OPTION 2: SOLOMON ASKED FOR WISDOM

When Solomon became king, God appeared to him in a dream and said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you" (1 Kings 3:5). Solomon could have asked for long life, wealth, revenge, or military success. Instead, he asked for wisdom to govern God's people well. Solomon understood that the responsibility in front of him required more than intelligence, position, or power. He needed wisdom that came from God.

That is very different from the kind of wisdom the Corinthians were tempted to admire. They valued impressive speech, status, and human ability, but Paul told them true maturity comes from receiving what God reveals by His Spirit.

POTENTIAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- *What kinds of wisdom is our culture impressed by?*
- *Why do you think Solomon asked for wisdom instead of wealth, success, or power?*

Transition Statement from Attention Grabber to Text:
Solomon knew human ability was not enough for the calling God had placed on his life. In 1 Corinthians 2:6–3:23, Paul showed that disciples

need more than impressive knowledge or worldly wisdom. They grow up as the Spirit teaches them to receive God's wisdom and learn the mind of Christ.

OPTION 3: TRAINING WHEELS

Training wheels can be a gift when a child is first learning to ride a bike. They provide stability, prevent some falls, and help a child begin moving forward. But training wheels are not meant to stay on forever. At some point, growth means learning balance, trusting what you have been taught, and riding with a steadiness you did not have at first.

Spiritual immaturity often looks like refusing to grow beyond the same old patterns. The Corinthians had real spiritual gifts, but their jealousy and division showed they were still acting like infants in Christ.

POTENTIAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- *Why is it tempting to keep training wheels on?*
- *How can someone be gifted or knowledgeable and still act immaturely?*

Transition Statement from Attention Grabber to Text:
Training wheels are useful for a beginner, but they are supposed to be temporary. In 1 Corinthians 2:6–3:23, Paul told the Corinthians that jealousy and division reveal immaturity. Disciples grow up as the Spirit teaches them to receive God's wisdom and learn the mind of Christ.

2 SET THE STAGE

LEADER TIP

This section provides the historical, cultural, and literary context needed to properly interpret and apply the text.

OUTLINE

I. Greetings and Thanksgiving (1:1–9)
II. Problems in the church (1:10–6:20)
  A. Divisions and factions (1:10–4:21)
  B. Gross immorality (5:1–13)
  C. Litigation before pagan courts (6:1–11)
  D. Fornication with prostitutes (6:12–20)
III. Replies to questions from the Corinthians (7:1–14:40)
  A. Questions about marriage (7:1–40)
  B. Limitations of Christian liberty (8:1–11:1)
  C. Veiling of women in public worship (11:2–16)
  D. Disorderly behavior at the Lord's Supper (11:17–34)
  E. Exercise of spiritual gifts (12:1–14:40)
IV. The Resurrection of the Body (15:1–58)
  A. Centrality of Christ's resurrection (15:1–20)
  B. Sequence of resurrection events (15:21–28)
  C. The resurrection and suffering (15:29–34)
  D. Nature of the resurrection body (15:35–49)
  E. The believer's victory over death (15:50–58)
V. Conclusion (16:1–24)
  A. Collection for the believers at Jerusalem (16:1–4)
  B. Paul's plans for visiting Corinth (16:5–9)
  C. Exhortations, instructions, and salutations (16:10–24)[1]

CONTEXT

Paul had just confronted the Corinthians for dividing into camps around gifted leaders and worldly measures of wisdom. Instead of boasting in Paul, Apollos, Cephas, or any other human personality, they were to boast in the Lord and unite under the cross of Christ. In this next section, Paul went deeper into the contrast between God's wisdom and the wisdom of the world. The Corinthians thought of themselves as spiritually impressive, but their jealousy and division revealed their immaturity.

Paul explained that true wisdom is not discovered by human brilliance or cultural sophistication. It is revealed by God through the Spirit. The Spirit teaches believers to understand what God has freely given them and enables them to receive the mind of Christ. This is why spiritual maturity cannot be measured merely by knowledge, giftedness, or association with the right leaders. A disciple grows up by learning to receive God's wisdom through the Spirit and living according to it.

[1] F. Alan Tomlinson, "1 Corinthians," in CSB Study Bible: Notes, ed. Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 1811.

FALLEN CONDITION FOCUS

Sin does not merely make us behave foolishly; it makes us misread reality. We call the cross foolish, treat worldly wisdom as maturity, and assume our strongest instincts are trustworthy. The tragedy is that we can sound wise, feel confident, and still be unable to receive what God has revealed by His Spirit.

GOSPEL RESPONSE

God does not answer our spiritual blindness by waiting for us to become wise enough to find Him. He reveals His wisdom through the Spirit and gives us the mind of Christ. Through Jesus, the wisdom we once misread as foolish becomes the very truth that saves us, anchors us, and grows us into maturity.

DISCIPLESHIP RHYTHM: DAILY DEVOTION

Daily devotion is the regular practice of intentional time reading the Bible, reflecting, and praying. This rhythm connects disciples with God. In 1 Corinthians 2:6–3:23, Paul showed that a disciple grows by receiving wisdom from God, which is primarily given to us in the Bible. Wisdom is not found in the fullest libraries, the most prominent scholars, or the best thinking of the world. It is not delivered in podcasts, Wikipedia, the news, or ChatGPT. It must be revealed by the Spirit and received with humility. Through Scripture, the Spirit teaches us to recognize what God has freely given in Christ and to learn the mind of Christ.

A disciple is built different; they are not left to be formed by the loudest voices of the age or their own natural instincts. Daily devotion trains us to listen before we react, receive before we offer, and submit our thinking to God's wisdom rather than the world's. As we return to God's Word again and again, the Spirit uses ordinary, repeated attention to grow us beyond jealousy, comparison, and immaturity into people whose lives are built on Christ.

3 LOOK AT THE BOOK

LEADER TIP

In this section, you will find exercises you can use to lead your group through Observation, Interpretation, and Application. As the leader, work through all the exercises below to ensure you understand the text well.

1 Corinthians 2:6–10a Paul clarified that his rejection of worldly wisdom does not mean the gospel lacks wisdom. "We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature" (v. 6). The problem is not wisdom itself but the wisdom "of this age" and "of the rulers of this age." Paul contrasted human wisdom, which belongs to a passing order, with God's wisdom, which is hidden, eternal, and revealed in Christ. The "mature" are not spiritual elites with secret knowledge. They are those who receive God's wisdom through the Spirit and understand the cross as the center of God's saving plan.

Paul called this wisdom "God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began" (v. 7). In Paul's letters, "mystery" does not usually mean something vague or impossible to understand. It refers to something once hidden in God's purposes but now revealed through the gospel. The cross looked like weakness and defeat, but it was the wisdom God had planned before the ages. The Corinthians were tempted to measure wisdom by what looked impressive. Paul told them true wisdom is measured by what God has revealed in Christ.

Verse 8 shows how deeply the rulers of this age misunderstood God's wisdom: "None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." The crucifixion was the clearest evidence that worldly power could not recognize divine wisdom. The rulers saw Jesus as a threat to remove, not the Lord of glory to worship. Their failure was not merely political or intellectual. They misread reality at its deepest level.

In verses 9–10, Paul drew on Old Testament language to describe what human beings could never discover on their own: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived." He was not speaking mainly about heaven as a future place, though the verse is often used that way. In context, he was describing the wisdom and grace God has prepared and now revealed through the Spirit. Human senses and imagination cannot reach God's wisdom unaided. "These are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit." Revelation, not speculation, is the door to the wisdom of God.

1 Corinthians 2:10b–16 Paul then explained why the Spirit is necessary. "The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God" (v. 10). This does not mean the Spirit learns or investigates as though He lacks knowledge. It means the Spirit fully knows the depths of God and is able to make God's wisdom known to His people. Paul used a human analogy in verse 11: just as a person's own spirit knows that person's thoughts, so the Spirit of God knows the thoughts of God. This means the Spirit knows the full breadth and depth of wisdom and so is able to reveal it.

In verse 12, Paul said believers have not received "the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God." The contrast is important. The world has its own patterns of thought, assumptions, loves, and measures of greatness. The Spirit enables believers to "understand what God has freely given us." Spiritual understanding is not merely an increase in religious information. It is the Spirit-given ability to recognize grace for

what it is and see the cross as wisdom rather than foolishness.

Verse 13 connects revelation to communication. Paul said, "This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit." The gospel is not only Spirit-revealed but also Spirit-taught. Paul's message and manner were not governed by the rhetorical values of the age. He sought to communicate spiritual realities in a way that corresponds to their spiritual source.

In verse 14, Paul described "the person without the Spirit." Such a person "does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness." The issue is not lack of intelligence. Paul was describing spiritual inability. The natural person does not welcome God's wisdom because it must be discerned by the Spirit. This explains why the cross can be heard, studied, and even discussed yet still be dismissed as foolishness by those who do not receive it through the Spirit.

Verses 15–16 contrast this with the person who is spiritual, meaning one who has received the Spirit. Such a person is able to discern spiritual realities because the Spirit enables them to understand what God has revealed. Paul quoted Isaiah 40:13: "Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" The implied answer is no one. Yet Paul added, "But we have the mind of Christ." This does not mean believers know everything God knows or possess perfect judgment. It means that through the Spirit, disciples are given a new way of understanding reality centered on Christ and His cross.

1 Corinthians 3:1–4 Paul now applied this directly to the Corinthians. Despite all his discussion about wisdom among the mature, he said, "I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly, mere infants in Christ" (v. 1). The Corinthians possessed spiritual gifts, but their conduct revealed immaturity. They wanted to see themselves as wise and advanced, but Paul said their jealousy and quarreling revealed they were still thinking according to the flesh.

Paul used the image of milk and solid food in verse 2. Milk is appropriate for infants, but it is not meant to be the permanent diet of the mature. Paul was not criticizing the basics of the gospel. He was exposing their inability to receive and live out the deeper implications of the gospel. The problem was not that the cross is too simple. The problem was that their hearts and habits were still shaped by worldly thinking.

Verses 3–4 identify the evidence: jealousy, quarreling, and party slogans. When one said, "I follow Paul," and another said, "I follow Apollos," Paul said they were "acting like mere humans." That phrase does not deny their humanity. It means they were behaving according to ordinary fallen patterns rather than the Spirit. Their divisions revealed that they were using the church to repeat the status games of Corinth rather than learn the wisdom of Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:5–9 Paul reframed how they should view their leaders. "What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants" (v. 5). The word "servants" lowers the status of the leaders the Corinthians had elevated. Paul and Apollos were not rival masters, founders of competing movements, or names around which the church should build identity. They were instruments through whom the Corinthians came to believe.

Paul developed this with agricultural imagery: "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow" (v. 6). Planting and watering matter, but neither can produce life. The decisive action belongs to God. This undercuts boasting in leaders without dismissing the importance of their labor. Ministry is real, but it is derivative. God gives the growth.

Verse 7 makes the point sharply: "Neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow." Paul was not saying ministers are worthless. He was denying that they are ultimate. Their significance comes from God's work through them, not from their own status. In verse 8, the planter and waterer have "one purpose," and each will be rewarded according to his labor. They are not competitors. They are coworkers under God. Unity is a sign of spiritual maturity, and likewise division is a sign of spiritual immaturity.

Verse 9 summarizes the image: "For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building." The Corinthians had treated leaders as possessions or party symbols. Paul reversed the ownership. The workers belong to God, and the church belongs to God. This shift prepared for the building image that follows.

1 Corinthians 3:10–15 Paul now moved from a field to a building. "By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder" (v. 10). Even Paul's foundational work was attributed to grace. As the founder of the Corinthian church, he laid the foundation by preaching Christ. Others were now building on it, and Paul warned that "each one should build with care."

Verse 11 is central: "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ." The church was not founded on Paul, Apollos, eloquence, wisdom, giftedness, or cultural status. Its only foundation is Christ. Any ministry, teaching, or community life that does not build on Him is unstable no matter how impressive it appears.

In verse 12, Paul named different building materials: "gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw." These likely represent the quality of ministry and teaching built upon the foundation of Christ. Some work is durable and faithful. Other work is temporary and unable to withstand testing. The issue is not simply whether people are active in ministry, but whether their work corresponds to the foundation on which it rests.

Verses 13–15 introduce the day of testing. "Their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light." Paul pointed to final judgment, where the true quality of each person's work will be revealed. Fire is the image of testing, not necessarily destruction alone. If the work survives, the builder receives a reward. If it burns up, the builder suffers loss, though "yet will be saved, even though only as one escaping through the flames." Paul distinguished between the salvation of the worker and the quality of the worker's labor. A person may belong to Christ and still build in ways that do not last.

1 Corinthians 3:16–17 Paul intensified the warning by reminding them what the church is: "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?" The "you" is plural. Paul was speaking to the church corporately. The gathered people of God are now the place where God's Spirit dwells. This is a staggering claim, especially in light of the Old Testament temple as the place of God's presence.

Because the church is God's temple, division is not a small matter. Verse 17 warns, "If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person." Paul used strong language because the community is sacred. To tear apart the church through pride, rivalry, or false building is to attack what belongs to God. The Corinthians needed to see that their jealousy and factionalism were not merely interpersonal problems. They were threats to the holy dwelling place of the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 3:18–23 Paul concluded by returning to wisdom and boasting. "Do not deceive yourselves" (v. 18). Self-deception is a serious danger, because worldly wisdom often feels obvious, sophisticated, and effective. Paul told anyone who thinks they are wise by the standards of this age to "become a fool" so they may become wise. This means surrendering the world's criteria of status and success in order to receive the wisdom of the cross.

He supported this with Scripture, quoting Job and the Psalms to show that God catches the wise in their craftiness and knows human thoughts are futile. Human wisdom, detached from God, cannot provide a secure foundation for the church or the life of a disciple. It is passing, limited, and unable to produce spiritual maturity.

Verse 21 gives the conclusion: "So then, no more boasting about human leaders!" The Corinthians had said, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," as though leaders gave them status. Paul reversed the logic: "All things are yours." Paul, Apollos, Cephas, the world, life, death, the present, and the future all belonged to them because they belonged to Christ. Leaders are gifts to the church, not masters over the church.

The final line gathers everything together: "You are of Christ, and Christ is of God" (v. 23). Their identity did not rise from their association with a favored leader. It descended from God through Christ and by the Spirit. Because they belonged to Christ, they did not need to boast in human wisdom or divide over human servants. A disciple is built different because the Spirit teaches them the wisdom of God, anchors them on the foundation of Christ, and grows them beyond the immaturity of the world.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:6–3:23

6 We 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. 7 No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been
hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. 8 None
of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not
have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 However, as it is written:

"What no eye has seen,
what no ear has heard,
and what no human mind has conceived"—
the things God has prepared for those who love him—

10 these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit.

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For who
knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the
same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.
12 What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit

who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. 13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. 14 The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. 15 The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, 16 for,

"Who has known the mind of the Lord
so as to instruct him?"

But we have the mind of Christ.

3 1Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. 2 I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. 3 You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? 4 For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere human beings?

5 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. 6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. 7 So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. 8 The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. 9 For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.

10 By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. 11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, 13 their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. 14 If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. 15 If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? 17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.

18 Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become "fools" so that you may become wise. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight. As it is written: "He catches the wise in their craftiness"; 20 and again, "The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile." 21 So then, no more boasting about human leaders! All things are yours, 22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas u or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, 23 and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.

LEADER TIP

In this section, you will find questions to choose from that will help your group consider how God calls them to respond to the text. Help your group set measurable action steps.

OBSERVATION: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Gather in groups of three to five people to discuss the Observation and Interpretation questions.

OBSERVATION EXERCISE 1: SOURCE OF WISDOM

Read 1 Corinthians 2:6–16. Where does wisdom come from? What role does the Holy Spirit play in understanding wisdom?

Suggested Response: Wisdom is sourced in God (v. 7) and imparted through mature believers (vv. 6, 7, 10), by revelation from the Spirit (v. 10). The Spirit reveals God's wisdom because it cannot be discovered by human intellect alone. The Spirit searches the things of God and enables mature believers to understand.

OBSERVATION EXERCISE 2: SIGNS OF IMMATURITY

Read 1 Corinthians 3:1–9. How did Paul describe the spiritual condition of the Corinthian believers? What evidence did he give that they were spiritually immature?

Suggested Response: Paul said the Corinthian believers were spiritually immature. He gave evidence in the labels and contrasts he used to describe them: infants in Christ; contrasting them as people of the flesh and not spiritual people; fed with milk, not solid food; the presence of jealousy and strife; behaving in a human way; divided according to human leaders rather than unified in God.

OBSERVATION EXERCISE 3: GOD'S PEOPLE

Read 1 Corinthians 3:10–23. What illustrations did Paul use to describe the church? What warnings and encouragements did he give?

Suggested Response: Paul described the church as a building, a temple, and a field (vv. 3–8). He said Jesus Christ is the only foundation. He warned that each person should build carefully because their work will be tested. He also warned that God's temple is sacred and that the Spirit dwells among them. Paul reminded them not to boast in human leaders because all things were theirs, they belonged to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

INTERPRETATION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 1: NEED THE SPIRIT

Paul said God's wisdom must be revealed by the Spirit. What is the difference between human knowledge and spiritual wisdom?

Suggested Response: Paul showed that God's wisdom is not something human beings can uncover by intelligence, status, or cultural sophistication. Spiritual wisdom is not the same thing as intellectual information. The rulers of this age failed to recognize the Lord of glory and crucified Him. God's wisdom must be revealed by the Spirit because sin causes people to misread reality and treat the cross as foolish. Disciples grow in wisdom as the Spirit teaches them

to understand what God has freely given in Christ and reveals God's purposes. Human wisdom has value in many areas, but it does not produce knowledge leading to saving belief in God.

INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 2: CONNECTION BETWEEN DIVISION AND MATURITY

Paul connected division within the church to spiritual immaturity. What does this teach us about how spiritual growth is measured?

Suggested Response: Jealousy and quarreling revealed that the Corinthians were still letting the world's wisdom shape their view of themselves, their leaders, and one another. This is being governed by worldly thinking. Although they had received real gifts from God, their relationships showed they were still acting like spiritual infants. Paul wanted them to see that maturity is not measured by knowledge, giftedness, or attachment to respected leaders but by whether the Spirit was teaching them to think and live with the mind of Christ, evidenced by humility and unity and dependence on God for growth.

INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 3: WHY THE FOUNDATION MATTERS

What does Paul's teaching about building the church reveal to us?

Suggested Response: Paul wanted the Corinthians to see that the church belongs to God and rests on Jesus Christ as its only foundation. Leaders and members may serve, teach, and build, but they do not own the church and cannot replace Christ. Growth within the church, both corporately and individually, comes about only by God. Because God's Spirit dwells among His people, division and careless building are serious. Disciples grow up when they stop boasting in human leaders and learn to build their lives and relationships on Christ.

APPLICATION: HOW DO I RESPOND?

QUESTION 1: Why is it hard to pray and read the Bible every day?

Suggested Response: Responses will vary. Use thoughtful follow-up questions to invite deeper sharing and authenticity. Typical responses are things like: I don't like to read; I don't understand the Bible; I don't have time; it is boring; I'm a guy and reading isn't my thing; I don't know what to do when I read the Bible; devotionals sound feminine; etc.

QUESTION 2: What voices or influences most often shape your thinking?
Suggested Response: I can be influenced by social media, news, entertainment, friends, family expectations, work culture, past experiences, or my own assumptions. Common influences are podcasts, Wikipedia, the news, or ChatGPT. These influences may not always be wrong, but they can become dangerous when they train me to see life differently than God does or to only perceive things disconnected from spiritual realities.

QUESTION 3: What are some signs in your life of spiritual immaturity?
Suggested Response: Spiritual immaturity can show up through

jealousy, comparison, quarreling, pride, defensiveness, or needing to be seen as right. A person may know Christian words or a lot of the Bible and still respond to people and life in ways that look more like the world than the mind of Christ.

QUESTION 4: What is our source of spiritual wisdom? How can daily devotion help disciples grow beyond spiritual infancy?

Suggested Response: Our source of spiritual wisdom is God as revealed by the Spirit. The Bible is our primary "source." It is God's revealed Word through the Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16).

Daily devotion gives God's Word, which reveals His wisdom, regular space to challenge and reshape us. As we listen to Scripture and pray honestly, the Spirit exposes what is immature, corrects what is false, and teaches us to respond with the wisdom of Christ rather than the instincts of the world.

QUESTION 5: Paul said one person plants, another waters, but God gives the growth. How does that truth encourage humility and patience?

Suggested Response: This reminds me that I am not the source of spiritual growth in myself or others. I can be faithful to plant, water, serve, encourage, and obey, but God is the One who produces growth. This helps me resist pride when things go well and discouragement when growth feels slow or non-existent.

QUESTION 6: What is one practical step you can take this week to receive God's wisdom through His Word?

Suggested Response: I can set aside a specific time each day to read Scripture, slow down enough to reflect on what it says, write down one truth to carry with me, or pray through a passage before making decisions. The goal is not just to complete a reading plan, but to let the Spirit form the way I think, desire, and live.

The Lakepointe App has a daily Bible reading that is easy to access and connects to the weekend sermon.

QUESTION 7: How can our group help one another grow in the wisdom of Christ rather than stay stuck in immature patterns?

Suggested Response: As a group, we can listen carefully to Scripture together, pray honestly, speak with humility, and resist comparison or competition. We can encourage one another to have a rhythm of reading the Bible daily, not just listening to the weekend sermon and coming to Life Group. We can also encourage one another when we see growth, gently challenge patterns that look more like jealousy or pride, and remind one another that God is the One who gives the growth.

4 CHALLENGE

LEADER TIP

End your study time with one final challenge and prayer. Your final challenge should pull together everything you covered in this lesson and call your participants to action.

Disciples are built different because they are not formed by the wisdom of the age but by the wisdom God reveals through His Spirit in His Word. Spiritual maturity is not simply knowing more, sounding impressive, or attaching ourselves to the right people. It is learning to receive the mind of Christ and allowing His wisdom to shape our reactions, relationships, decisions, and desires.

This week, pay attention to what is forming your mind.

- What voices are shaping your first instincts, strongest opinions, and everyday reactions?
- Where do jealousy, comparison, pride, or defensiveness reveal that you still need to grow?
- What specific rhythm of daily devotion would help you receive God's wisdom with greater humility and consistency?

You do not grow up in Christ by trusting the wisdom that already feels natural to you. You mature as the Spirit teaches you to receive what God has revealed and as you build your life on Jesus Christ.

Let's pray.