

1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)^{iv}

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God. Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish. But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him"— these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For what human being knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's, except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual. Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny. "For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.]

^{iv} **About the Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)**

Paul now develops the principle that "God's weakness is stronger than human strength" (1:18-25) by using himself as an example. Both his presentation and his physical unimpressiveness (2 Corinthians 10:10) show that the "demonstration of the Spirit and of power" was not his doing, but resulted from God's power.

Yet, despite the negative meanings of wisdom that Paul has argued against—that is, wisdom as oratorical technique (1:20, 2:4) or as human standards of judgment (1:21-26)—he can speak of a

wisdom for the “mature” or perfect. This wisdom is the full significance of “Christ...the wisdom of God” (1:24) in the plan of salvation hidden for ages but not revealed.

This knowledge was hidden from “the rulers of this age,” perhaps the political authorities, but more likely spiritual forces. This wisdom is not an esoteric teaching reserved for the few, for it is made known to all who possess the Spirit (2:12-13, 6:11, 12:13). The process of coming to maturity is a lifelong one, but the Corinthians’ behavior shows that they are still mere infants in the Christian way.