

Well, it's a bit of a good news,
bad news situation. Good news. Last time I was before
you, I had 120 verses to get through. Tonight, it's only 10. Bad news. Last time, I
didn't
have any points. We were just trying to get through
the text. Tonight, I've got five. We're going to try and get through
them quickly. Don't you worry. Further bad news, I'm not Neil.
So there's that. Whenever you have to do one of
these one-offs, one of the hardest things for me is finding a text. Like, what text
do you choose? They're all so amazing. Okay, like maybe we wouldn't
do the genealogies at the first of Chronicles, but other than
that, they're all pretty great. Well, a few weeks ago, as Neil
was preaching through the Psalms, he said that we appropriate the
Psalms to us through Christ. As Christ understands the Psalms,
as he applies them to his life, we then apply it to ours through
Jesus. And it immediately reminded me
of this text, especially the end of this text. If you haven't
already, just let your eyes look down to the end of verse 16 of
1 Corinthians 2. This incredible sentence, but
we, you and I, that is believers, the people of God, have the mind of Christ. What
does that even mean? That's
incredible, that's an incredible statement from Paul. So tonight
what I want us to do is I want us to unpack what this means
that you and I have the mind of Christ. Before we do that
and before we read God's word, let's go to him in prayer. Heavenly
Father, This is your word written from of old for our edification
that it might build us up, that we might in turn know you more,
love you more, and that there might be more of you in our lives
for a watching world to see. And so this evening, as we take
the next 20 or 30 minutes or so to think about what it is
to have the mind of Christ, would you be with us? Help me to have
clear words. Help me to be like that violin
string once plucked, heard, but not seen. And instead, what would
be seen is you and your cross. And then help us that as we try
to appropriate all of this to our lives, it would not be for
our glory, but for yours. and that through us more and
more might see you and know you. Do it, Lord. We love you and
pray this in the precious name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus
Christ. Amen. So 1 Corinthians 2, starting
in verse 6. 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. but we impart a secret
and hidden wisdom of God, 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 heart of man imagined,
what God has prepared for those who love him. to these things
God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches
everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's

thought except the Spirit of that person which is in him?
So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 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, and we might impart this in words not taught by human wisdom, but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. 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. The spiritual person judges all things but is himself to be judged by no one. For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. Praise be to God for his holy, inspired, and inerrant word. May he write all its truths upon our hearts. So, five points. What is this mind of Christ? What is the Christian mind? Well, first off, the Christian mind is a secret. Now, Paul is actually kind of being a bit snarky here. He's playing with the Corinthians a little bit. If I could do some setup. Y'all remember when I preached on 1 Corinthians 1 through 2:5? Yeah, me neither. I completely forgot that I had preached on that text until I went to go put together my outline for this one. If I don't remember it, I certainly don't expect you all to remember it. But let's just read to one through five, just to give you some context, and just look for the word wisdom. It seems like the Corinthians really love this idea of wisdom. In the Greek, it's Sophia, the sophists. They come in and they have all this worldly wisdom. So here we are. Two, starting in one, and I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God, with lofty speech or wisdom, for I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling. And 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 may not rest in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. So Corinthians really like this sort of, ooh, what's our ears telling us now? Who has something new and cool to say to us that we haven't heard before? And there's an entire group of these religions that are classified as mystery religions. That word mystery is exactly the word that is interpreted here as, but we impart a secret and hidden wisdom. And what they would do is they would tell their believers, hey, we're gonna give you a little bit of wisdom, just a little bit of knowledge, and if you like it, come back and support us. Support us with your time and your talent and your treasure, and then we'll give you a little bit more. And then give us more time and talent and treasure, and then we'll give you more and more and more. And what Paul

is saying is we didn't come with this sort of, hey, we'll give you just a little taste. We gave you the full thing. We gave you the gospel. That's all we put in front of you was the gospel. We didn't give you some sort of itchy-eared philosophy. We gave you that which seems folly and foolish to a watching world. And Paul gives three types of people that this wisdom will always be a secret from. First off, the immature. The immature can't handle what it is as the gospel. Secondly, the natural person as opposed to the spiritual person. And then the rulers of this world. For some reason, all three of those categories seem like they can't even begin to comprehend the gospel. Sometimes you and I get a little nervous and fearful because the people we uphold most, especially when it comes to powers of the intellect, they don't share our faith. And sometimes they can be pretty big opponents of our faith. Especially if you're a student here tonight, especially a college student, that can be a difficult thing for you to have to navigate, as you are in front of a professor that is obviously capable in his field, obviously, or her field, and knows what they're talking about. And yet, they're often derisive. of what is most fundamental to us, that thing, that grid through which we look all of life through, which is Christ and what he's done for us. When I was an IT guy, a number of the IT guys, even in the South, derided the gospel. This little fantasy that you would have. Who is this kind of God in the sky? And what's he gonna do? And how's he gonna save you? And how silly is this? As compared to any other religion out there. And it was scary. I was the youngest person in my group by 20 years. I was a systems engineer for AutoZone when I was 21. And it scared me. These were men who were brilliant in their field. AutoZone is and was a Fortune 100 company, one of the greatest places to work in Memphis still, a great company. Get all your stuff from AutoZone. They're great. Love them. They shepherded me and my family well, ultimately. But it scared me that these men that I held in such high regard, that were obviously brilliant and good at their job, would be so derisive at this thing that seems so precious. But isn't it beautiful that scripture isn't silent on that issue? Scripture actually tells you that there will be people who are wise in their own eyes, but are absolute fools, and to them the gospel will be foolish. You shouldn't be scared or afraid when that happens. It is going to be a secret to them until the Spirit chooses to reveal it. Now, just because it's a secret knowledge does not mean that we keep it to ourselves. We are actually to share it with a watching world, with as many who will listen. It's a bit of an open secret, if you will. I remember also kind of in those days, you know, I would watch some baseball. I was never good

at any sport whatsoever, but I liked sports. I'm different from Derek in that. I actually like sports, though I'm terrible at them. So I would watch baseball, and I knew what was going on, and then I hit this period of time where I was trying to figure out vocation and like who I was dating and then ultimately who I married and all that. So there's about a five year gap where I really didn't watch any sports at all because I was just busy in life getting started as a career and a husband and all of that. And then I tuned back in somewhere around 2001 and 2002. Now, if you had watched in 95, there was this skinny little outfielder for the Giants by the name of Barry Bonds. And then all of a sudden, you tune back in in 2001, and there's a truck-sized guy. Actually, I think he played for the Pirates. And then he played for San Francisco. And you're like, that can't be the same guy. And then Mark McGuire, same thing. He was for the A's, skinny little guy. And then all of a sudden, huge guy, crushing balls for the Cardinals. And it was kind of an open secret. Everyone knew there was something funny going on. Everyone knew that it wasn't just they were working out. You don't get like that just by working out. There's a hidden power there. It was a bit of an open secret.

Well, same thing for us. It's an open secret about where we get our power from. They don't understand it. They may not like it, but it's true. We get our power not from ourselves, but from the Lord and from the gospel. So it's a secret, but it is an open secret. And we share it because we never know when the spirit will use us in order to enlighten the heart of someone else, how wonderful it is. When you share the gospel with someone and you can see in that moment, they kind of get it. Because I do what I do, because I'm more passive, as a counselor, I'm receiving people as they come through the door with various difficulties, and I'm a counselor who's a pastor who's also at a conservative church. So most people who come and see me know and love Jesus. They just need help applying the gospel to their life in that moment, and they need a pastor who's willing to weep with those who weep. and rejoice with those who rejoice, and that's what they need. However, every once in a while, every once in a while, I get someone in my office who doesn't know the gospel. And when I put it in front of them, like, brother or sister, I could tell you all sorts of things that you can do, and I'm happy to help you with the sort of things that you can do, but it's all Band-Aids until you get your heart right. And let me tell you, what it means to get your heart right. What it means to get your heart right is to know and love Jesus Christ, who is willing to die that you might be saved, not withhold anything from you, but allow you to be an inheritor in his kingdom. How wonderful is that? And every once in a while, you see it. This beautiful, their eyes, they get it, tears. It's wonderful. So though it's

a secret for us, we're always foot forward trying to share it with others. If we didn't believe that, we wouldn't have commissioned a Cuba team right here to go out and to work and to share the gospel with others. So it's secret, but it's an open secret. Secondly, the mind of Christ is sure. This is actually one of the most incredible phrases in this whole section, comes at the end of verse seven. Let me read the whole thing. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. Now, if you're a good, like, Westminster confession of faith and larger and shorter catechism person, what's the first thing in your mind when you think of glory? It's His glory. What's the chief end of man? To glorify God and enjoy Him forever. It's always upward focused. Now, there's no, like, glorimeter. where we're just trying to pump enough glory that he'll finally say, okay, enough. Now Jesus can come again. No, he's perfect in glory. We don't add anything to him. All we're doing is pointing people to the perfect glory which he has in and of himself from all time. But when we think about glory, we almost always think about it upward. But here is Paul saying, hey, Christ came and he died for your glory. Not his. So that you might share an inheritance with him. So that you might be with him in heaven forever. That you might have fellowship with him. Brother or sister, his sacrifice is all about you. What? Me? I mean, Jesus, do you know me? I know me. And I know the sins that I struggle with. How difficult it is to kill and to weed out and uproot those sins that seem to have deep root in my heart. I don't know that I would die for me, to save me. Plenty of people out here that I think probably deserve it, but me? And Christ says, no, if you have hope on me, I have come so that you might share in glory. I love Paul here. Paul says in Romans 8 and verse 18, for I consider that the suffering of this present age not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us, future glory. Whatever it is that you and I have here, it's nothing. It's not even comparable. You know, sometimes you've had to do those silly compare and contrast assignments in school. I'd be like, I want you to compare and contrast a single grain of sand with all the money in the world. And you'd be like, no, there's no comparison there. You can't, the gulf is so vast. I couldn't even begin to write that assignment. And that's Paul's sense here. Your future glory is so incredible that if you were to look at all the things that you are suffering here, and you do suffer here, don't let anyone fool you. Dr. Ross did an amazing job. I keep telling people my job this morning, because you have people like Neil and Dr. Ross,

I'm just your palate cleanser. That's all I am. I'm the evening service palate cleanser and when you get back to the normal preaching, you'll be like, yeah, that's really good. If you did not hear Dr. Ross this morning on suffering, Please, please go back and listen to it. It was phenomenal. But scripture is very clear that suffering does happen, sometimes for sin, sometimes for God's own purposes, which we don't understand completely in this life and may not even completely understand when we get to glory. And yet, all of that suffering, which you will have, is nothing. Nothing. It's like the grain of sand. compared to that immeasurable glory which you have waiting for you. You know, sometimes when we talk about the gospel and the requirements of the gospel, because faith has fruit, sometimes we're so scared. We have this precious thing, and we're afraid that if we take the gospel seriously, Jesus is gonna take it from us. You know what your precious thing is. It might be a relationship, it might be an item, it might be your treasure, it might be your reputation, it might be your power, but it's precious. And you're trying to guard it. But what happens is is that when you set your mind on the gospel, and you know what you have in Jesus, this, this becomes nothing. for what you have here in Christ. And the more you look fully at Christ, the more this becomes nothing. Why was I so scared to lose that when I have this, when I have Jesus? So it is sure. This is your safe harbor, by the way. that God knew before the age and for your future glory that he would have this plan, which was the gospel, in order that he might save you. This is no new plan. God didn't say, oh, well, we're going to try some sacrificial system and see how that works. Hey, we're gonna try a geopolitical situation, see how that works. Oop, that didn't work. Let's try exile, now let's try return. Oop, that didn't work. Huh, I wonder what will happen next. No, he is omniscient, he is omnipotent. He knows beginning to end and he knew before he created a single thing that Christ was gonna have to suffer. And he was willing for that to happen, his most beloved. He's not a withholding father, a father with an angry withholding face that's just like, well, I guess since Jesus died for you, I guess I'll love you. No, he's a loving father that says, I love you so much. So much I'm willing to send my most beloved to die that I can get you beloved Are you willing to do that? Yes, I am because I love them that much too That's what you have in the gospel Whenever anything comes for you And believe me things are coming Either they got you or they're on their way Actually as I was thinking about my prep for this particular passage I I kept thinking more and more how we need this, mind of Christ, more than ever right now. Somewhere around 2016, I had to get off of all social media, because

social media just got crazy. And it got crazy around the election time especially, and I was just like, nope, don't need it. It's just a big distraction. I'm not even going to touch or taste it. I'm just putting it aside. I haven't been on really since. except Twitter, because Twitter's just funny, and I like watching people fight. But other than Twitter, no social media. And 2020 came around, another election cycle, and things felt like they got amped to about 11 with people. And here we are, another election year, and it seems like things are already at 11, and we're nowhere near the election right now. You recognize, by the way, that that's what the algorithm wants to do to you. It wants to make you think that you have community as you commiserate with a bunch of other people, usually angry about something else. And it wants to feed you just enough to make you anxious and sad and angry, because then it can give you something that you may want to consume in order to make yourself feel better. Which is why we are A sad, anxious, angry, depressed, and in debt up to our eyeballs sort of situation right now. And what we need is more mind of Christ, safe harbor. Whatever's coming, I don't know what's coming. This is not a be so heavenly minded as to be no earthly good. This is be so heavenly minded that you are worldly extraordinary. that you don't get sucked down like the rest. My hope isn't in the next cycle. My hope is an eternal God who knew before time began all that would happen, and he's doing all of it for my future glory, which no one can take away from me. So it's secret, it's sure, But the mind of Christ is also sacrificial. And don't worry, we'll pick up the pace here. It is inherently a sacrificial mindset. We don't just sit back and meditate on the gospel in order to make ourselves feel better. I had a professor in seminary who used to call morning devotionals morning emotionals. Because so often it was people reading little tidbits here and there to be inspired and feel good about themselves. That's not what this sort of meditating on the gospel that we have here in Christ, that's not what it does. It restores us for sure that we might then sacrifice for others. is a self-sacrificing view, not a self-satisfying view. You wanna look different than the world? Choose that as your methodology. Choose to look at all the rest of the world and all of your relationships through a self-sacrificing grid. Paul does this. He does this in multiple occasions, but let me just call your attention to two, including your header verse, if you'll look at your bulletins. In Philippians 2, verses 5 through 7, Paul writes this. This is the entry into that beautiful Christ hymn. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus. I mean, it's almost a perfect application of exactly what we're talking about here, is it not? Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality

with God a thing to be grasped? but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men." He will go on to say, consider others more significant than yourselves. In Philippians 4, as he's addressing the conflict in the church, he says, be of one mind. Now you may read that and think, oh, you mean we have to have the exact same opinion on all things? No. We're humans. We don't have the same opinions on all things. He's saying, have the same mindset among you, which is yours in Christ Jesus, counting others more significant than yourselves. If I am willing to sacrifice for you and you are willing to sacrifice for me, we're in pretty good stead. But if I'm just looking to consume you that I might be self-satisfied, we're headed in the wrong direction. So the mind of Christ is always sacrificial. You want to see this again, you can look at Titus 3. In Titus 3, he's making the argument that the people should be obedient and not quarrelsome. Do you remember when I preached on that? Good, me neither. Don't be quarrelsome. And how is it that you are to not be quarrelsome in the midst of a political season, which is exactly where the Cretans found themselves in that moment? You are to remember the gospel. Remember that we were saved by grace. And before that, we hated each other and were hated by each other. It's a gospel of sacrifice that you might be obedient and love even those who hate you. That's our mindset as Christians. Our mindset is to show that sort of peace. When we do that, guess what we're reflecting? We're reflecting the prince of peace and his gospel of peace. So it is secret, it is sure, it is sacrificial, But it's also superlative, really stretching for the S words here. But if you look at verse nine, Paul has kind of re-languaged an Old Testament saying, what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him. What an inspirational verse. Actually, I love my alma mater, though no one here has ever heard of them before. It's Belhaven University in Jackson, Mississippi. Love them. Great school. Would send my own kids to the school. But we had a chapel that we had to do every single Tuesday that the semester was in. And we would say this verse at the end of the chapel, you know, on the big screen would come up this verse, and then you would have like 1,500 students all say this verse together back at this big screen. And it was all so inspirational. You know, here we are college kids and we're studying and thinking about the future and, you know, God has these wonderful things prepared for you. That's how it came across. That's not at all what he's saying. It's not an inspirational verse. It's a verse about your limitation and Christ's exaltation. See, he's saying that you can't, by some empirical measure, you can't put this in a lab somewhere and come out with a gospel. No eye has seen. You can't learn this through

some mystery or mystic tradition, a tradition that doesn't have the revealed will or word of God. There's no tradition that's gonna get you to God who is three in one, One of those who has two natures, who in that nature took on sin and died, that you might be righteous even though you did nothing to deserve it. You can't get there. A heart imagined, you can't intuit it either. You can't come to the gospel on your own. It's our own limitation. By the way, that's what drives missions. Even though people might get some sense that there is a God, and even though they could get a sense that there is a loving God, and even though they could get a sense that there is a holy God, and get a sense that they are sinners, that somehow has to get between the chasm of holy God and sinner, they can't get to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Not unless we go. Now, going doesn't have to mean going to Cuba or going to India. In some instances, it means going next door to your neighbor. And more and more, that is true even here in the South. There are people who work in the cube next to you, who study in the desk next to you, who live on the same street as you do, even some who think they may even be Christians. because they grew up that way but have no idea what the gospel is. I was one of those guys. Been to church a handful of times my whole life. Could have told you that Jesus died for my sins, but I didn't even know what that meant. I was pretty sure that Moses was on the ark. My Bible knowledge was zero. And then someone came and shared the gospel with me through the tool of the Westminster Confession of Faith. Now, I would not suggest the Westminster Confession of Faith as an evangelism tool. I was just weird like that. But it got me into God's Word. It got me to know who I was and who He was. And it's something that I never could have imagined by myself. It was more wonderful, that's what Paul is saying here. If you were to come up with all the plans in all the world about how we as a sinful group get to a holy God, the gospel outstrips all of them. Far more than you and I could ever think or imagine. So it's superlative. Lastly, and probably most importantly, Though quickly. The mind of Christ is spiritual. It's one of Paul's biggest points here. Only the spirit can know the mind. The spirit of a man discerns his own thoughts. You can't know my thoughts. You can see my actions. I can tell you what I'm thinking, but you can't know them for sure. Only the spirit inside. Who can know the thoughts of God? Especially when there is that chasm between who we are as creatures and who he is as creator. Divine. Except his spirit. And his spirit reveals to us the mind of Christ here. and the Word of Christ. He's saying that if you want to have the mind of Christ, you must steep your mind here, where you can understand Him, where you can hear His heart. I was having a conversation earlier

today following Sunday school. We were talking about the whole LGBTQT discussion. That was kind of the topic for me to discuss. And someone brought up the whole like, someone had told them, what about loving your neighbor? Jesus loved people. Shouldn't we accept because Jesus loved people? Well, you know, there's only one character in the synoptics, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, that Jesus reports to love. And you think about that, okay, if only one person he loves, who is that? The father? Nope. One of the disciples? Nope. There's the rich young ruler. That's who he loved. He loved him and told him what he lacked. That's what love looks like sometimes. and you would have no idea if you weren't steeping your mind here in God's Word. But that's sometimes what love looks like. So, it is a secretive mind, it is a sure mind, it is a sacrificial mind, a superlative mind, and a spiritual mind. Esther Meeks in her book, Loving to Know, great book, though it's a pretty thick book, on epistemology, how do we know, also something only nerds really care about, but good, and she has a little small summary version of that book, which is also very good, but she says that with all knowledge, there are three aspects. There's the knower, the known, and the knowing. We don't always think about that. In this instance, Paul has given us all three. The knower is the people of Christ, and the known is the person of Christ. The knowing comes through the Spirit of Christ. If you want to know Him more and you feel like it's obtuse for me for some reason, I feel like I can't get into it, what you need to do is pray. for more spirit-filled faith. This is faith-seeking understanding. That as you more and more understand the nature and character of Christ and his gospel, that you can more and more apply it to your daily life. What would it look like to apply the gospel moment by moment In our marriages, less me, more you. Less my glory, more your glory. In our parenting, sacrificing, not in a way that you have to see it, and I'm expecting applause, but in a way that helps to build you up, that you might see in me love and care and concern. in a way that points beyond myself, a willingness to repent when I do poorly, which is pretty much every single day. What would it look like for that to be true in our work lives, in our schools, if there was more of the mind of Christ and less of the mind and anxieties of the world? It would be a beautiful thing. Let's pray that God would grant us just that. Heavenly Father, we thank you. Man, we have this enormous and incredible privilege to have access to the mind of Christ. And it's not by our own imaginations, it's by your word, which you've written down for us and given us throughout the ages. that we may see you and know you and know your character. Then your character is full of goodness and love and wisdom and truth and mercy and sacrifice. And so we ask that you would

help us more and more as we meditate intentionally on you and your word and less allow our minds to meditate intentionally on the world, that we would be in a place to show forth your character more and more. You would help us to have the courage, the winsomeness, the care that we may show you to a watching world. Would you help us to love and sacrifice for our neighbors? even when those neighbors are the closest to us, those who share our own roofs, and do it in a way that brings not us glory, but you. We love you and pray this in the precious name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.