

The Gospel Centered Life Pt. 2

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[0 : 00] And I'd like you to open up your Bibles to Romans chapter 12.

! Last week we returned to Romans after having taken 16 weeks in a row off from Romans. 13 of those weeks, or about half of those weeks, we're devoted to looking at the spiritual disciplines of the Christian life over the summer, and then several other weeks looking at the Psalms and some other passages.

But we finally return back to Romans, and we've begun chapter 12, which is the beginning of a new section of the book of Romans, which extends about halfway through chapter 15.

And so now we're going to spend several weeks walking through chapters 12 and 13 and 14, the first half of chapter 15, seeing how Paul instructs us to live our lives in light of the gospel that he has been preaching and that he has laid out so clearly for us in the first 11 chapters of this letter.

And so this morning I want us to focus our eyes. We looked at verse 1 last week. We're going to focus on verse 2 this week. But I want us to start back again in verse 1 and read these first two verses, which are introductory to these chapters as a whole, and which will help us to gain our footing and gain the right perspective to receive and understand the rest of Paul's instructions about our lives in these chapters.

[1 : 33] So if you would, stand to your feet as we read the first two verses of Romans chapter 12. Paul writes, I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Father, we want to be able to discern your will. We want to live lives that are in accordance with your will. So teach us this morning how to do that.

Teach us how to have our minds transformed by you. We ask these things in Christ's name. Amen. You guys take a seat.

So for 11 chapters, and we summarize those 11 chapters as best I could do in just a few minutes last week. For 11 chapters though, we know that the Apostle Paul has both defined and defended the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[2 : 48] The gospel that he himself had been preaching from city to city all throughout the Roman Empire. And he wrote this letter primarily so that he could define and defend the gospel for the believers at the church at Rome.

To whom he was planning to go. He was planning to visit them and use Rome as a staging point for further missionary efforts. And so we know, we've said several times, that the book of Romans was written primarily for Paul to introduce himself and his gospel to the church at Rome so that they might be compelled to support him and pray for him and help him as he continued his missionary endeavors.

And so he devotes 11 chapters to defining and defending the gospel. But now we are, as we've said, turning the corner so that we can see not what the gospel is, but how the gospel changes us.

Not how the gospel rescues and delivers us from our sins, but how the gospel changes us and transforms us and sets us free from our tendency to live lives that are full of sin.

And we described that last week as a gospel-centered life. A life lived in light of what Paul calls the mercies of God.

[4 : 06] A life that is fundamentally different having experienced the gospel, having received the gospel, having seen the mercies of God take effect in your own life, in your own heart, to transform you, to rescue you.

We now are beginning to see what the life lived after that begins to look like. The gospel-centered life, or a life shaped by the truth of the gospel.

And we said that it is fundamentally a life of worship. It is fundamentally a life that we offer up to God in everything that we do, and everything that we say, our lives are to be oriented toward bringing honor and glory to Jesus Christ.

In fact, if you look at the end of verse 1, that's exactly how Paul describes it. He says that this living sacrifice which we are to offer to God, he calls it our spiritual worship.

And if you'll recall from last week, I said that that word spiritual is a word that can be difficult to render into English because there's no single English word that corresponds exactly to it.

[5 : 10] So the translators grasp for words that might communicate effectively what is meant here by this particular Greek word. And so some translations will say reasonable worship.

Others will go with spiritual worship. But the idea communicated by this word is that our worship or our service before the Lord ought to correspond to the truth, in particular the truth that Paul has been proclaiming for now 11 chapters.

The lives that we live, gospel-centered lives, worshipful lives, are lives that ought to reflect the truth of the gospel itself.

But the question follows up upon that very easily. How's that going to happen? Because we don't naturally have minds that are shaped by the gospel.

Our behavior is not naturally in correspondence with the truth. And so Paul follows up this basic instruction, live a life of worship, of sacrifice, of devotion to God that corresponds to the gospel.

[6 : 17] He follows that up with a very practical exhortation as to how's that going to happen. Something's going to have to happen to our minds. Something's going to have to happen to the way that we think and perceive the world around us and ourselves within that world.

And so verse 2 comes following on the heels of verse 1, powerfully instructing us into how this is going to happen. So take a look at verse 2 this morning. We'll do something really simple. We'll just take it phrase by phrase and walk through verse 2.

And having done that, then we will have laid the foundation for what remains in these very practical chapters. So look at the beginning of verse 2. He gives us a simple command. Do not be conformed to this world.

Do not be like the world. Do not have your thinking and your lifestyle to match that of the world around you. Now typically we read this verse and we think, well Paul is telling us don't act like lost people.

Don't live your lives like the sinners that surround you. And that is true. That is what Paul is communicating. But he's communicating much more than that. The phrase, the word, this world is actually this age.

[7 : 30] And when we understand that Paul is describing for us not merely the habits of lost people, but he's describing an epoch, a period of time in which the world has fallen, the world is not shaped according to God's original creative intentions for it.

Then we begin to get a picture of what Paul really intends here. We are not to live our lives according to the pattern of this fallen sinful age or epic of history.

In fact, a number of times in the New Testament, that very same phrase, this age, is contrasted with another age, with what is sometimes called the age to come.

In fact, if you hold your place in Romans and turn all the way back to the Gospel of Matthew, if you guys can't keep up with some of these verses, that's okay. Many of them will be up on the screen.

But in Matthew chapter 12, Jesus uses this very same language, the language of this age in verse 32. A well-known verse.

[8 : 31] We don't have time to dig into the details of it this morning. I just want you to notice the language of age here. He says in verse 32, Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

Now here's the contrast. Either in this age, exact same phrase that we encounter in Romans 12.2, either in this age or in the age to come.

So there are two ages. There is this age, which Jesus refers to, and apparently this age has not ended at the time that Paul writes the letter to the Romans.

This age does not end at the coming of Jesus, or the crucifixion of Jesus, or the resurrection, or even the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. No. This age extends beyond that, even to when Paul was writing Romans.

But it does contrast with some future age that is to come. Turn forward a few pages to the Gospel of Mark. We'll see this kind of language again in the teachings of Jesus.

[9 : 29] In Mark chapter 10, Jesus says in verse 29 of Mark 10, Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house, or brothers, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for my sake and for the Gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands with persecutions, and in the age to come, eternal life.

There's a slight difference in the language. It refers to this time, but that's a phrase that's equal to the phrase this age, but it is contrasted with the age to come. And in the age to come, there will be eternal life.

So there is this age in which we are called to sacrifice, and there is the age to come which holds out the hope of eternal life. But it's not only Jesus that contrasts this age, to which we are not to be conformed, with the age to come.

Even the Apostle Paul does it. So turn back further into Paul's letters. Turn all the way to Ephesians. I'd like you to see this in Ephesians chapter 1.

In Ephesians chapter 1, verse 21, Paul is speaking of Christ, and he says that Christ is to be far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named.

[10 : 55] Now here it is. Not only in this age, but also in the one to come. So there's this age in which we now live, but there is in contrast an age which is to come.

That age is an age in which sin is no more. That age is an age in which we are set free from the bondage of sin in its entirety and in its fullness.

But this age is not the age to come. In fact, stay there in Ephesians. You can just glance down a few verses and you can see how Paul describes this age.

Verse 2, verse 1 of Ephesians 2, You were dead in trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world. Now, underline that, circle it, whatever you want to do, because it's the same phraseology.

This age. You were following the course of this age. What did that mean? Well, it meant that you were dead in your sins and your transgressions.

[11 : 58] It meant that you were following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. That's what life lived according to this age.

Life conformed to this age. That's what it looks like. It looks like dead in trespasses and sins. It looks like following the course of this age. It looks like following the prince of the power of the air.

It looks like disobedience. He goes on to describe, among whom we all once lived in the passage of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind. We were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind.

That's what life in this age looks like. Conformity to this world, this age looks like all of those things. Which helps us to understand why in Galatians 1.4, Paul would refer to this present evil age.

That's how he describes it in a nutshell. This age, this world, this epoch of time is evil. And those who live in conformity with it can be described as dead in trespasses and sins, disobedient, children of wrath.

[13 : 13] That's what this age is like. This age began all the way back in the Garden of Eden. It began with the sin of Adam. It began with the fall of Adam.

With Adam's turn away from conformity to God's revealed will, to his intention to determine for himself what was good and what was evil.

And as a result of Adam's sin, as a result of Adam's fall, now all of us who are descended from Adam live within a fallen world, but we also inherit from him a fallen nature.

We also inherit from Adam the guilt and condemnation due for his sin. So to live in this age is in fact to be a child of Adam and to live according to the nature that we've inherited from Adam and to stand under the condemnation that was due to Adam for his sin.

Now I'm not making all of that up. I'm not importing that from somewhere else into Romans chapter 12. That's in fact what we have seen Paul teach us in Romans chapter 5.

[14 : 22] Go back to Romans. We're jumping around a lot this morning, I know, but this is so important for us to understand. Back to Romans in chapter 5, we see Paul teaching about the effects of the sin of Adam which initiates and begins what Paul calls this age or this world.

So in Romans 5 verse 12, Sin came into the world through one man and death through sin. That's how it came into the world.

Verse 18, One trespass led to condemnation for all men. The middle of verse 19, By the one man's disobedience, the many were made sinners.

That's what it means to be conformed to this age. It means to still be in Adam. It means to still be living your lives in accordance with the nature that we inherit from Adam.

And Adam's sin has affected us in every possible way that you can imagine. Our sinfulness, our fallen nature that we come into this world already in possession of impacts all of who we are.

[15 : 31] But it impacts especially the way that we think. It impacts our minds and our ability to discern right from wrong.

Our ability to see clearly God's ways and God's will in this world. In fact, in Romans chapter 1, where Paul is describing or he is laying out the depravity of mankind, he is showing us our great need for redemption.

He is showing us that we need to be rescued by God from our sin and from our sinful ways. We can see very clearly the effects of the fall of Adam upon the minds of all of his descendants.

It's not merely that we come into this world with hearts that are twisted by sin, but we come into this world with thinking that is twisted by sin. And we gain from a fallen world ways of thinking that do not line up or not in accord with God's ways.

So that when Paul describes the depravity of man in Romans 1, he returns over and over to the effects of the fall upon the mind of man.

[16 : 40] Theologians sometimes call this the noetic effects of sin. You don't need to know that phrase, but if you come across it, then you'll know that they're talking about how sin affects our brains, how it affects our thinking.

So take a look. I want you to see a few verses in Romans 1 so that you can sort of more fully appreciate this. Look at verse 21. Although they knew God, this is a reference to all humanity essentially.

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Became futile in their thinking, unable to think clearly. This doesn't erase the reality that the existence of God and the basic moral structure that God has built into the universe is, as Paul says in chapter 2 of Romans, it is sort of engraven upon our hearts.

It's written upon our hearts as those made in the image of God. And yet we look around us and it doesn't appear as if people seem to innately know the truth about God's existence and the truth about God's basic moral standards.

[17 : 52] And the reason is not because that's been erased. The reason is because it's been clouded over. The reason is that our minds have been so twisted that even what's there, we push aside.

We hide. We pretend as if God's moral standards are no longer enforced or as if they don't even exist. Take a look down at verse 28.

He continues his description and says, And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

They did not see fit to acknowledge God. And this language is very, very similar to chapter 12. They didn't acknowledge God, didn't see fit to keep Him in their minds.

So what did God do? Handed them over to a debased mind. A mind now incapable of discerning the truth.

[18 : 55] In fact, this word that is translated debased here is actually the same word that we find in chapter 12 where we're told that the purpose of this renewing of the mind is that you might be able to test and discern or some translations say prove.

It's the same word but with a letter added on to the beginning of it, the letter A, as if to say the opposite of that. So in chapter 12, the goal is that we might be able to discern God's will by having our minds renewed and transformed and remade.

Why? Because according to Romans chapter 1, we're unable to do that in our fallen state. We're unable to. Our minds are the exact opposite of what God is going to do in them.

We have a debased mind. We have a mind unable. This adding of this A on there similar to what we do with like, for instance, the word theist refers to somebody who believes in God, a theist.

But if you put an A in front of it, an atheist is somebody who doesn't believe in God. So one who's capable of discerning God's will in chapter 12, verse 2, but in chapter 1 is described as those who have minds incapable, unable to test, prove, discern the will of God.

[20 : 10] And as a result of that, our lives are lived out of accord with God's will. Look at the results. Verse 29, They are filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice.

They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

That's the result. That's what a mind that does not have the ability to test, prove, and discern God's will, that's what the life lived by one with that kind of mind.

That's what it looks like, Paul says. Now, not that all of these things are present in every body, but some of these things come out as fruit in every lost person's life.

They do. Our minds are affected by the fall of Adam. And to be one who is conformed to this age is to be one who fundamentally still has their thinking shaped by this fallen world.

[21 : 22] That's what Paul means. So when he says, don't be conformed to this world or this age, he's calling for a complete reversal of who we are before we come to Christ.

That's what he's calling for. And then he goes on to describe that with another command. Don't do this, but here's what's going to have to happen if you're not going to be conformed to the world.

Notice what he says in verse 2. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind. Be changed. Be transformed.

Have your mind made new. That's what needs to happen. We need new ways of thinking. We need new patterns of thought. We need our minds to be fundamentally changed from what they were before we came to Christ.

And that's not something that happens immediately. There is a supernatural change wrought in our hearts and minds at conversion by God when we are saved.

[22 : 27] But it's not completed yet. There is an ongoing process as we continue to live in this age and yet not be of this age.

There is an ongoing process in which God begins to refine and renew our thinking.

Slowly over the course of our lives as we follow Christ, we find that our thinking becomes more and more transformed from what it once was.

And Paul says that's necessary. If we're going to live lives that correspond to the truth of the gospel, then we're going to have to have this process of transformation take place.

Because whether you realize it or not, prior to coming to Christ, your decisions and your ways of thinking about things did not correspond with the truth of the gospel.

[23 : 27] The gospel is not only the message that Jesus saves. Oh, it's that. But the gospel is so much more than that. The gospel is the revelation of who God is.

It is the revelation of all that God has done to rescue us. It is a revealing of the very nature and will and ways of God. And so for us to live in accordance with the gospel means radical change has to take place.

Not just in our hearts in the way that we feel, but in our minds in the way that we think. And the goal of this transformation, the goal of this ongoing process of renewal, Paul tells us very clearly, is so that you may be able so that by testing you may be able to discern what is the will of God.

That's the goal. The goal of this whole process is so that you are able to discern God's will. Now you'll find various ways of translating this in different English versions.

Sometimes it's just translated so that you might be able to prove what is the will of God. Some so that you might be able to test and up prove what is the will of God. This is an interesting word because it's in different contexts it can take on different flavors.

[24 : 48] But I think here the primary intent of it is the second word that the ESV, they use two words to translate it, but it's the second word, this issue of discerning that I think is the main point here that Paul is making.

That as God works on our minds, as He transforms our minds, He's going to make it so that we can discern what His will is. So that we can tell because we live in a world full of all sorts of options.

We live in a world that's full of nuances and shades of gray and in the middle of all of that we've got to be able to discern black from white. We've got to be able to tell what God's will actually is.

This of course is not God's secret sovereign will, His plan for all of history. No, this is God's moral will. His will that tells us how to live.

His will that tells us what He wants us to do. And on the one hand we want to say how do we know that? How can we discover that? How can we discern God's will? It's simple. We learn the Bible.

[25 : 48] We read our Bibles and then we know God's will. And that's absolutely true. But that applies to the process of renewal. The means by which God renews our minds and transforms our thinking is through the Word of God.

So the goal of that though is so that in everyday circumstances we might be able to apply the principles of God's Word to situations that may not be directly addressed in God's Word.

Right? There are a lot of decisions that we have to make on a daily basis and there's no single verse or passage that you can turn to to discern what God's will is in that moment.

There's no easy, there's no easy, quick answer. So many times I think sometimes early in our Christian lives we'll take the approach of God I don't know what to do here so I'm just gonna turn and point and hopefully that verse will tell me what to do and we end up ripping things from our context because we want the Bible to do something that the Bible is not designed to do.

The Bible is not designed to be a simple manual for every circumstance of your life. The Bible teaches us about who God is. The Bible teaches us principles for how to live.

[27 : 03] And the wise person the truly mature and godly Christian will be able to take those principles and that knowledge of what God is like revealed throughout the scriptures and apply that to all the varied circumstances of our lives.

Should you take this job or should you should you take this promotion that does not seem on the surface to be a moral issue but there are always moral issues bound up in everything that we do.

but you can't turn to a specific passage that will tell you whether or not you should take the promotion or whether or not you should move to a new city. You can't. You can't turn to a specific passage to tell you what to do with your children in every circumstance.

There are so many things that you will face with your kids that you are just not initially prepared for that you would have never imagined that that issue could crop up in your home and yet there it is in your face.

And if all you can do is find a verse about it you are going to be in trouble. But if your mind has been renewed by the word of God you ought to be able to discern the will of God.

[28 : 14] And Paul as if he he knows he knows that we need even a little bit more help than that shows us exactly what that is going to look like. He gives us three words at the end of this verse that tell us the sorts of things the kinds of things that we ought to look for that in discernment we would say yeah that's in accord with the will of God.

That that matches God's will or that no that falls outside of God's will. Not because I have a specific passage or verse in mind but because I know God based on his word and that's not going to fit.

Look at the three terms that he uses we'll just look at these quickly I don't want us to get bogged down in these but he uses three terms he refers to that which is good that which is acceptable and that which is perfect.

These are not overly complicated terms for us to understand but I think that they're very practical. So he first refers to the will of God as encapsulating those things that which is good.

It's just a simple word there's nothing complicated about this word. It's used all over the Bible and we use it all the time. It's practical everyday goodness. That's what it is. And this is not necessarily this isn't some super spiritual category it's just goodness.

[29 : 40] Sometimes we think how can Paul say in Romans 3 that no one is good no not one right? And then no one is righteous and yet then we we read through the Psalms and we see people describing themselves as being righteous or being good.

How does that work? Because we can measure goodness the way Paul does in Romans chapter 3 by whether or not our lives align with the fundamental purpose for which we've been created to bring honor and glory to God.

That's the ultimate measure of goodness. But there are also things that we look at in the world around us as relatively good. Right? So it is it is good relative to everything else even if you may not do it for the glory of God it's relatively good to everything else if you see somebody and perhaps they're maybe you have a new neighbor moving in and you see them and they're really struggling to carry some of their stuff in perhaps their movers didn't show up it's good it's nice it's kind to walk over and say hey you need a hand with that?

That's a good thing to do that's nice I think that's the sense in which Paul is using the word good here and we recognize it all around us we recognize when people do good things as opposed to when they do bad things it's bad to lie so that you can get ahead at work it's good to tell the truth even if it's going to cost you those are not necessarily super spiritual categories but they're practical categories nonetheless and Paul says that in the discernment of God's will in the day to day business of life the things that correspond with God's will are going to be the things that are good and you look around you can see what some of those some of those things are those that are good and then he brings in another word as if to clear things up even more because we have a tendency to define good in ways that are not good so he follows it up with another term and he says it's got to be acceptable and you say acceptable to whom?

well acceptable to God because it's the same word that he uses in verse 1 when he talks about our sacrifice being acceptable to God so we can just take the words to God and import them into verse 2 because I think Paul means for us to do that almost every other time that Paul uses this word in his letters it's followed by the words to God so that Paul is saying the will of God not only encompasses those things that we see as good but in case you're doubtful as to whether or not something is good it must be something that is acceptable to God because let's be honest the world is so fallen this age is in such a state of disarray and it's thinking so off course that often times we will look around us and see people calling that which is evil good and that which is good evil and sometimes we look and we seem surprised and taken aback how in the world could you think that that was good it's so clearly unacceptable to God you don't even need to know the Bible very well it's just not acceptable we ought to know those kinds of things all this business that we see in the news about the transgender issue when that really first started to come up and it's a fairly recent issue in terms of being in the national conscience on the news and stuff when it first started reading stories about it being an issue

[33:10] I just thought how is this an issue this is not complicated you don't even need to be a Christian to see that this is not a complicated issue it's just not there are men and there are women it's very simple it's obvious and yet there are those out there who are calling what is good that simple assessment of how we're made and put together they're calling that bad and they're saying that something that is a violation of those clear norms good so that we need this second term we need to be corrected at times because our culture is going to define evil as good and so sometimes we need to add to that it's also got to be acceptable to God your good meter might be off so test it alright to see if it's acceptable to God those principles of the word of God that are renewing and transforming your mind or showing you and teaching you what's acceptable to God and so you test and you discern and then you know whether or not a particular point of view or a particular course a direction that you might be about to take whether or not it's acceptable in God's sight and then the third term the last term that he uses is this word that's translated as perfect and of the three terms this one probably is the one that can most easily throw us for a curve because it has a number of possible translations perfect or complete are the most common translations of this particular term we see that quite frequently so that Jesus says that you need to be perfect as my heavenly father is perfect it's the exact same word and there it's clear obviously the word means perfect but in this context

I'm not so sure that that's what Paul means by this obviously the will of God is perfect right it is complete it lacks no form of goodness that's true but I think that Paul is talking here about the things practically that correspond with God's will there aren't a whole lot of perfect things in the world all of them are somewhat tainted to some point so I think that Paul's meaning here is I think he's intending for us to understand this word to describe the things that match or fit with Christian maturity there's a word that is at times translated as mature or maturity throughout Paul's letters and what I found most interesting this week in my studies as I was trying to figure out how Paul is using this word is that in the other places in Paul's letters where I found Paul using this particular word in connection with the life of the mind which is what this verse is all about in connection with the life of the mind and what it means to be wise and to know

God's will wherever I saw that I saw the translators fairly consistently rendering it as mature that's what it means I'll show you a couple of examples and then we'll be done turn over to Ephesians if you would real quickly Ephesians chapter 4 we can see this connection between the mind and knowledge and this particular word being translated in the sense of maturity not perfection but maturity he says in verse 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God there's the life of the mind God's at work transforming us till we're all unified and until we have the knowledge of the Son of God saturating our minds and then here you'll see the word to mature that's the same word to mature manhood to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ so the aim is maturity the aim is a mind shaped and formed by the knowledge of Christ that we could be described as mature it's not the only place though turn over to 1st

Corinthians this is probably one of the most important places where we see the connection between this terminology and the life of the mind that has been shaped by God in comparison to the mind that has not been shaped by God we'll jump in in chapter 2 but then we need to look at some verses in chapter 1 1st Corinthians chapter 2!

verse 6 where we can see the word itself he says yet among the mature there's the words if you want to underline it there it is yet among the mature we do impart wisdom although it's not a wisdom of this age same term see it similar language 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 has 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 see the contrast here the mind shaped by this age the rulers of this age could not understand why?

[38 : 18] they lack the kind of maturity that Paul says among those who possess this among those who are mature we impart real true wisdom they don't have it they're of this age they can't have it but to the mature we impart wisdom that's who we give it to not to those shaped by this age now back up to chapter 1 verse 20 again same kind of contrast where is the one who is wise where is the scribe where is the debater of this age same phrase again has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world for since in the wisdom of God the world did not know God through wisdom it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe for Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom but we preach Christ crucified a stumbling walk to Jews and folly to Gentiles but to those who are called both Jews and Greeks

Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God so that this age is characterized by foolishness it will look at what is true wisdom and call it foolish why?

it's not mature it's not mature can't see can't see clearly can't discern the truth doesn't know thinks it's wise Paul says it's foolish all of it and he's calling us to be something different he's calling us not to be like the rulers of this age because he says in 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 he says that the God of this age a reference to Satan the God of this age has blinded the minds the hearts and the minds of unbelievers so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of God in Christ they can't see because their minds and their hearts are blinded by the God Satan of this age and Paul says do not be conformed to those who are like that but be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that the cross of Christ which once seemed foolishness is now the very essence of the wisdom of God that which once seemed folly crucified for sins a substitute for sinners

I have seen theologians describe the sacrifice of Jesus in the place of his people as cosmic child abuse they say it's foolish doctrine I say it's the wisdom of God and you cannot see it you cannot see it on your own Christ crucified in the place of his people so that all who trust in him would be rescued and delivered not only from the penalty of their sin but from the power the enslaving power of sin over our minds and hearts and Paul says don't be like the people of this age who view the cross as foolishness but be fundamentally transformed as the word of God renews your mind makes it new changes your patterns of thinking and then you will be able in all the varieties of experience of life you will be able to discern God's will to see the good to see what's acceptable to see those things that correspond with real genuine

Christian maturity the ability to embrace the true wisdom and reject foolishness let's pray through