

VI. CITIES

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR SESSION 6



Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God.

1 Corinthians 1 (NRSV)

1. Review Paul's "capital-ist" strategy.
2. How might the practical commercial layout of Roman cities contributed to Paul's influence across class boundaries?
3. List and describe some of the characteristics of ancient cities portrayed in Rodney Stark's *The Rise of Christianity*.
4. How would the urban realities Borg lifts up have influenced Paul's "matrix"?
5. What are the implications of Paul's communities having been comprised of both the relatively well-to-do and the dislocated urban poor?
6. Where do you see this information influencing your spirituality? The church? The world?