

The Foolishness of God

1 Corinthians 1:17-25 ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize but to **preach the gospel**, and **not with words of eloquent wisdom**, lest the **cross** of Christ be **emptied** of its **power**. ¹⁸ For the **word of the cross** is **folly** to those who are **perishing**, but to **us** who are **being saved** it is the **power of God**. ¹⁹ For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." ²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not **God made foolish the wisdom of the world**? ²¹ 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. ²² For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³ but **we preach Christ crucified**, a **stumbling block** to Jews and **folly** to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the **power of God** and the **wisdom of God**. ²⁵ For the **foolishness of God** is wiser than men, and the **weakness of God** is stronger than men.

❖ Recap:

- Who We Are In Christ
- Unity

❖ Introduction:

- Why are you here this morning?
 - It is of no consequence...it does not matter...you are here...
 - And you have the opportunity to hear the Word of God this morning so please listen carefully
- My Introduction is going to be brief and to the point this morning...
 - But you must listen now to this...
 - Do not forget this as we look through these verses...
- It is this: It is Simple:
 - "All thoughts, and religions, and philosophies that differ ever so slightly from God's word have their source, their origin, in the perverted mind of Satan, the Adversary. In the same way that his words were poison in the Garden of Eden when he barely changed God's word and told partial truths to Adam and Eve, they are poison today."
 - You need to decide this morning if you want to be held captive by things that seem good, and empowering and comfortable, **yet are lies**...
 - Or do you want to know truth and be set free by it.

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❖ The Call of Paul

- Acts 26:16–18 "For this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; delivering you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, **to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance** among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me"
- When Paul came, he was faced with a deluge of philosophies, but said ...I claimed to know nothing except Christ crucified...
 - He came to preach the Gospel

❖ Not with Words of eloquent Wisdom

- They had all these people in Corinth that could speak so well, and so intellectually
- And Paul is saying He is not there for that.
- They had all these Philosophies and Sciences as do we

- **Rationalism** – any view appealing to reason as a source of knowledge
- **Modernism** - In regards to religion....is the thought that old religions and faiths have become outdated...they need an upgrade
- **Postmodernism** – Has a lot to do with whatever you think is right...
 - It is about seeing the world the way you see it....
 - No room for absolutes in this thinking.
- **Psychology – a Fruitful, yet dangerous science**
 - What is going on inside of men... What is wrong with us
 - Now, I say this as an observation... And not as an expert...
 - ◆ And I do not want us to be dumb to the truth of mental problems...
 - **I want to mention this briefly because of the dangers that come with it...**
 - ◆ Very often it tries to make things out to be a problem in our brain...
 - Instead of a problem with Sin...
 - **I believe my point is made:**
 - ◆ With so many people that get away with crimes because a psychiatrist says they could not think right....
 - **But often when we can not control things, and have problems mentally**
 - ◆ We go to Psychiatrists...
 - ◆ **These people that do the most malicious acts of rape and murder, etc...**
 - We try to study them and come up with a scientific answer to their problem...
 - There is one
 - **It is Sin...**reaching its greatest capacity in some individuals..
 - **Remember in the Bible when people were seizing all over the place, and acting really crazy, and harming themselves, etc....**
 - ◆ What was the cause?
 - ◆ Demons...they had infiltrated that person...
 - ◆ Jesus would cast them out, and the person would be fine...
 - **Let me prove what I am trying to say...**
 - ◆ There was a point in history, shortly after the creation.... That...
 - ◆ Man and Woman was perfect....
 - No physical failings...
 - No mental failings...
 - ◆ **What changed this state?**
 - It was the insertion of Sin into the human race from that point forevermore...
 - ◆ **Sin brought about The Fall....**
 - **And it was complete...**
 - Sin is at the root of every evil we have today...
 - From the decaying of our physical and mental capacities....
 - Our diseases, cancers, sicknesses....
 - Our earth's natural disaster's
 - The starving, and pain, and war and whatever else you could name...
 - ◆ **And all of us in here are affected by this aren't we....**
 - But Jesus is the answer to **sin** in our life...
 - He brings life eternal.....He wakens our dead spirit and makes it alive...
 - **Now...listen carefully!**
 - **I am not saying there is no need for people to need certain prescriptions to level out things within their brain...**
 - ◆ Because we are fallen, our bodies are frail, and they fail us....Especially our minds

- ◆ But I say...Use wisdom...Seek God....Repent of sin...
 - Make sure the problems you are dealing with are not sin related first and foremost...
 - And this only comes through desperate prayer and study of God's word...
 - And a person/doctor with wisdom and knowledge in this area...

¹⁸ For the **word of the cross** is **folly** to those who are **perishing**, but to **us** who are **being saved** it is the **power of God**.

❖ The Word of the Cross

- **The Word** – logos – the speech of the cross...the preaching of the cross...
 - **Birth, life, teaching, beating, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ...**
- **Folly to some**
 - Foolishness (moria) – where we get our word moron...it is moronic, nonsense.
 - **“thinking that contradicts our own, is normally viewed as foolishness”**
 - **That God would take human form, be crucified, and raised in order to provide for man's forgiveness of sin and entrance into heaven**
 - is an idea far too **simple, foolish, and humbling for the natural man to accept.**
 - **It leaves us out doesn't it....**
 - We do not like this...this gospel...this foolishness...
 - There is no room in it for our own **strength, self worth, accomplishments, pride, discoveries**
 - **Many respond to it As Foolishness**
 - **“When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, [they] began to sneer” (Acts 17:32).**
 - They made fun of the gospel Paul was preaching. (In Athens)
 - **APPLICATION TOFAY....**
 - People make fun of the gospel all the time...
 - Maybe it is in sarcastic comments....whatever they may be.... because they do not understand it
- **But it is....the Power of God to those being saved**
 - **Not foolishness to Christians.;;; Is it?**
 - Think of the power we have had applied to us in Savlation....**to wipe away our sins.**
 - To take away our **guilt**
 - The **power to sustain** us in fellowship with God...
 - To give us **peace** with Him
 - The power to **help bring others up out** of darkness and into this kingdom...

¹⁹ For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not **God made foolish the wisdom of the world?**

❖ What God Did

- **So many people have their own answer to God...**
 - People have their **own religions**...Whatever **suits them**
 - Or **feels** right...or was how they were **raised**....Or **makes sense**....
- **Now we have hundreds of differing paths to heaven, or Enlightenment....**
 - But all those thoughts, and philosophies, and false religions, **will be destroyed**....
 - **“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.” ²⁰**
Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not **God made foolish the wisdom of the world?**
- **Quote From Is 29:14**
 - God had told King Hezekiah that his enemy would be confounded...

- that he would destroy their wisdom in battle.
- So God destroyed 187,000 of the enemies troops to protect Judah from invasion
- **The Military powers of the enemy did not Prevail**
 - And Man's thinking and desire to be independent of the Creator will Fail!

21 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.

❖ How God Saves

- **Not through Enlightenment...**
 - Through all those Philosophies
 - Through man made religions
 - Through studying the world around us...
- **Not through Wisdom**
- **But Through preaching**
 - Getting up in front people and explaining the Gospel of Jesus Christ...That is how people get saved...
- **All Christians can preach...**
 - Maybe not be what is defined as a preacher today...
 - But that word simply means to proclaim
 - To just tell people about Jesus Christ.
- **What we preach...**
 - **The Story of the fall of man**
 - **Our Shortcomings....**
 - **And what Jesus has done about that!**
 - **Repentance and Faith**

22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³ but **we preach Christ crucified**, a **stumbling block** to Jews and **folly** to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the **power of God** and the **wisdom of God**.

❖ What man wants vs what God has given us.

- **Everyone is looking for salvation on their own terms...**
- **Jewish folks were looking for signs...**
 - Remember Gideon...
 - Almost like they had been spoiled for so long with God giving sign after sign
 - By the time He gave the most Signs...with Jesus Christ...
 - They were numb to it...
- **Greeks wanted wisdom...**
 - They wanted it to sound wise in their ears...
 - To follow one of their ways of thinking....That they had spent years thinking and studying and perfecting...
- **Us Today**
 - We are like some kind of crazy mixture today...
 - This country is so diverse that we have thousands and thousands of ideas on God...
 - We are looking for a certain way to God...
- **And to many people....The Cross of Jesus Christ and Repentance and Faith do not fit into that.**

❖ Human wisdom cannot understand the cross.

- **Peter, for example, did not understand the cross when he first heard Jesus speak of it.**

- In fact Peter took Jesus “**aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, ‘God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You’**” (Matt. 16:22).
- Peter’s own understanding about the Messiah had **no place for the cross**.
- He thought the Messiah would soon **set up an earthly kingdom** and that everything would be pleasant for His followers.
- **But Peter’s wisdom was contrary to God’s wisdom,**
 - **and anything contrary to God’s wisdom works for Satan.**
 - Jesus’ reply to His disciple was quick and sharp: “**Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s**” (v. 23).
- **When the soldiers came to the garden to arrest Jesus, Peter still did not understand.**
 - He still **tried to interfere with God’s plan**.
 - Drawing his sword, **he cut off a slave’s ear**—for which Jesus again rebuked him (John 18:10–11).
- Only after the resurrection and ascension did Peter understand and accept the cross
- He now had God’s Spirit and God’s wisdom, and no longer relied on his own.
- **Years later he would write,**
 - “**He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed**” (1 Pet. 2:24).

²⁵ For the **foolishness of God** is wiser than men, and the **weakness of God** is stronger than men.

❖ **God is Wiser and Stronger**

- **Let us never think we could, or can do it better.**
- Just like a **child that thinks He knows better than His parents...**
 - He can try and try on his own understanding, and it may even please him in the end...
 - But the older and wiser parents who care for the child end it up right.

❖ **Application**

- People have enough Philosophies....
 - Enough outside influence...
 - Enough opinions
 - Enough Religions...
 - Enough people giving them their own take on life and Death and God and Man
 - Enough of Satan’s influence in their thinking...
- **They need TRUTH...**
 - The Bible says it will set you free...
 - And when the Son sets you free, you are free indeed...
 - The Truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, of the Cross....
- Give it to them...
- **Your Decision**
 - “All thoughts, and religions, and philosophies that differ ever so slightly from God’s word have their source, their origin, in the perverted mind of Satan, the Adversary. In the same way that his words were poison in the Garden of Eden when he barely changed God’s word and told partial truths to Adam and Eve, they are poison today.”
 - You need to decide this morning if you want to be held captive by things that seem good, and empowering and comfortable, yet are lies...
 - Or do you want to know truth and be set free by it.
- **You will not get all of it in one day...**
 - But it is in the Bible...
 - It is found in the 66 books of the Bible!

❖ **Invitation:**

- The Gospel: All Die....Law...Judgment...Good news of the Story of Jesus Christ...Repentance and Faith