

- I) V18 INTRO: For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are **REVIEW**
- II) Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, and began with words of encouragement
He made it clear that they were genuinely saved, the abiding fruit of his ministry
- III) One proof of their salvation was their eager expectation of being with Jesus
Because they have a genuine love for Jesus, they look forward to being with Him
Phil 3:20 Our citizenship is in heaven **and we eagerly await** (look for expectantly)
a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ
- IV) They knew their citizenship (community) was a heavenly community
They were eager for their new home and community, but **not as an escape**
- V) They were not tired of earth and its problems, though they were great
They were desiring to see Jesus, eagerly awaiting to see Him face to face
- VI) Not all of them had had the opportunity of knowing Him while He was here
Some may have, but not all of them could make that claim
- VII) Still, by faith, His word, and the Spirit they had grown to know Him
This had developed a love for Him and eagerness to see Him
1 Pe 1:8 Though **you have not seen Him**, you **love** Him; and even though you do not see Him now, **you believe in Him** and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy
THOUGH THEY HAD PROBLEMS
- VIII) Paul encouraged them by telling them that **God** would confirm them to the end
He said God would establish them firmly, and would keep working in them
- IX) This is because **God is faithful**, and He keeps His promises to His people
Nu 23:19 God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: has He said, and shall he not do it? or has He spoken, and shall He not make it good?
- X) After encouraging them, he began approaching the problems in the church
As we saw: Divisions had cropped up
- XI) The heart of their divisions rested on their **preferences** of certain teachers
Because of this he pleaded with them to endeavor to return to unity in Jesus

- I) Believers need a united effort to overcome the works of the enemy
Satan is the great divider, and he sows seeds of discord to create division
- II) Paul exhorted them to address the factions to maintain their fellowship
His desire was for their state of mind and opinions and sentiments to be repaired
WHAT WAS HAPPENING
- III) Some were sowing seeds of discord by establishing preferred teachers
Some preferred Paul, and others preferred Apollos, Cephas, and even Jesus
- IV) The simple fact was none of these teachers gave up their life for the world
Only Jesus did and He is not to be used as a weapon to divide the church
- V) Jesus is the Savior, and there are those who have been set apart to preach Him
Each had their own manner of preaching, but the message was the same
- VI) At any rate, preaching the gospel is not **for the glory of the preacher**
Neither he nor the others originated the gospel: it originated with God
Gal 1:12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ
- VII) This is manifested by the fact that Paul was thankful he didn't baptize many people
Because Greek teachers collected pupils, it could seem he was doing so also
Baptism would seem to some to be a way of collecting disciples
- VIII) He was glad he only baptized a very few and was not drawing disciples to himself
This demonstrates that he was not the originator of the gospel, but a messenger
- IX) V17 Jesus did not send me to baptize but **to preach the gospel**
BEGIN STUDY
- X) V18 For the **message** of the cross **is foolishness** to those who are perishing but
The **gospel** of salvation through Jesus' sacrifice makes no sense to the unsaved
- XI) According to the web page **Cold Case Christianity**
In general: **Jews** believe Jesus was Mary's son, was a teacher (Rabbi), had many disciples, was respected, performed miracles, claimed to be the Messiah and was crucified on the cross. They also acknowledge His followers reported Jesus was raised from the dead.

I) **Muslims** believe Jesus was born of a virgin, is to be revered and respected, was a prophet, a wise teacher who worked miracles, ascended to heaven, and will come again.

Hindus believe Jesus was a holy man, a wise teacher, and is a 'god'.

Buddhists believe Jesus was an enlightened man and a wise teacher

II) For all of them, the message of the cross **is foolishness**

III) Here, Paul corrects them for their exaltation of human eloquence and wisdom

Foolishness: moronic: Having limited communication and social skills enabling **some degree** of academic or vocational education.

TODAY

IV) Many consider **preaching repentance** judgmental, impolite, and offensive

It contains the call **to change** your mind (repent) and they see no need to do so

V) To those receiving it, repentance provides transformation and forgiveness

It brings light to the darkened conscience; life to the spiritually dead, softened hardened hearts

VI) Repentance also brings peace now, and hope for the future

NOTICE

VII) V18 To those who **are perishing** (*Who are dead*, even while thinking they are alive)

Before salvation, every person is spiritually dead

Eph. 2:1 And you He made alive, **who were dead** in trespasses and sins

VIII) It is **foolishness** (absurd) to those who are **perishing** (being fully destroyed)

They are being destroyed by preferring human wisdom over God's revelation

They are not fully destroyed but are **on their way** to final judgment

ON THE OTHER HAND

IX) To those who are being saved **the gospel** is the power of God

The **power of God** is revealed in His ability to save any who repents

Ro 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the **power of God** to salvation to everyone who believes; for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live **by faith**.

X) Notice that Paul says that **the gospel** is the power of God

This is because Jesus conquered sin and the grave in order to save us

- I) From the 80's until this day there have been those who have promoted miracles
Signs and wonders have been emphasized, as well as prosperity and health
- II) Some movements have been birthed by such promoting these things
The Vineyard was known for its emphasis on signs and wonders
The prosperity gospel has infiltrated the church, promising wealth and health
- III) Kenneth Hagin is the father of the movement, guaranteeing health: heart failure
Kenneth Copeland has over the years accumulated an \$800 million net worth
Jesse Duplantis preaches prosperity and has a net worth of over \$50 million
- IV) They and many others have emphasized health and wealth as God's power
What is the power of God? Miracles, signs, wonders, prosperity?
Those emphasizing these things have missed the point of **the gospel**
- V) The **power of God** is revealed through Jesus' resurrection and our salvation
It is especially demonstrated through the transformation of human lives
- VI) This is why Paul wrote V17: lest **the cross of Christ** should be made of no effect
- VII) V19 For it is written I will destroy **the wisdom of the wise** and bring to nothing the
Paul knew that man's wisdom could not save anybody
The mystery of God revealing grace and mercy **by the cross** was beyond them
HIS POINT
- VIII) The gospel isn't simply a wise way to live, but the revelation of salvation
Those who are perishing do not fear of the Lord, and therefore are not wise
Pr 12:15 The way of a fool **is right in his own eyes**, but he who heeds counsel is wise
- IX) V20 Where is the wise Where is the scribe Where is the disputer of this age Has
Where is **the Wise** (In reference to **the world's** intellectuals)
Where is the **Scribe** (Referring to Jewish doctors of the Law)
Where is the Disputer of this age (Greek philosophers)
PAUL'S POINT
- X) Christianity was triumphing over the empty depressing philosophies of man
Ac 17:6 When they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to
the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have **turned the world upside down** have
come here too.

- I) V21 For since **in the wisdom of God** the world **through wisdom** did not know God
The gospel is too deep to be grasped through unaided human understanding
Mt 11:27 All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son **chooses to reveal him**.
- II) No one has the ability of knowing God without Him choosing to reveal Himself
We are by nature rebels, with sinful hearts
Eph 4:18 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts
- III) Because man is in sinful darkness, God reached out to save us
In doing this, He destroyed the wisdom of the wise (V19)
HIS THOUGHT
- IV) Who could have invented a God so good that He would send His own Son?
Who would have invented a message that was built on love and grace
- V) Salvation is *always* works to the heathen
No other religious faiths are built on the grace of God: all are on works
Ro 5:6-8 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, **Christ died for us**.
- VI) V21 It **pleased God** through the **foolishness** of the message
Why: Because the message requires innocent childlike faith **to embrace**
- VII) Children do not have a concept of what something costs
They are dependent on others to provide for them what they **want** or **need**
It never crosses their minds that something costs time and energy to acquire
FOR EXAMPLE
- VIII) They want to go to Disneyland: single day cost \$104-179, depending on date
This doesn't include parking (\$30.00), food and souvenirs
They just receive it without any awareness of what it cost
- IX) The price of salvation is great, and no man could ever pay for it
Ps 49:8 Redemption does not come so easily for no one can ever pay enough

- I) This gives us insight into what Jesus taught about entering the kingdom
Mk 10:13-15 People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, He was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God **like a little child** will never enter it."
- II) V22-25 For the Jews request **a sign** and Greeks seek after wisdom
This refers to habits of Jews and Gentiles: *Jews request a sign*
Mt 12:38-40 Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you." But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth
- III) Even if they did see a miraculous sign, it didn't mean they would believe in Him
They could believe in **the work** but not in the one performing it
Lu 11:14-16 Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon left, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowd was amazed. But some of them said, "By Beelzebub, the prince of demons, He is driving out demons." Others tested him by asking for **a sign from heaven**.
- IV) Greeks seek after **wisdom**, loving philosophy and eloquence
Ac 17:19 They took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to Him, May we know what this new teaching is that You are presenting? You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they mean." (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time **doing nothing** but talking about and listening **to the latest ideas**.)
- V) 2 Ti 3:7 speaks of those who are **always learning** but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth
- VI) Christianity does not rest on amazing miracles or profound oratory
It rests on **satisfying a heart** that is hungering for forgiveness, and rest
Jn 16:33 I have told you these things so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble but take heart! I have overcome the world!

- I) V23 We **preach** Christ crucified to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks
The Savior of the world was placed on a cross, giving His life for our salvation
Ro 5:8 God demonstrated His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners,
Christ died for us
- II) The Jews were looking for a Messiah that would rule as a Prince
Jesus was humble, and came as a Suffering Servant
Mt 11:28-30 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give
you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.
- III) The Jewish authorities and many of the people considered this weak
He made claims to be Messiah, but they wanted physical proofs
- IV) To the Jews He was a stumbling block, something that offended them
The thought God would take human flesh and die on a cross was offensive
Ac 4:11 This Jesus is the stone you builders rejected, which has become the
cornerstone
- V) The Greeks wanted human wisdom, and the gospel to them was foolishness
It was simply a fable resting on a humble man dying a humiliating death
- VI) V24 But to those who are called both Jews and Greeks Christ the power of God
He is the power of God, in that He humbly bore the sins of the world
He is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe
- VII) To the Greek, He is the wisdom of God, revealing what true wisdom is
They see His love, mercy, kindness and grace in what Jesus did for us
- VIII) How Many Kings
How many kings stepped down from their thrones How many lords have
abandoned their homes How many greats have become the least, for Me And how many
gods have poured out their hearts to romance a word that is torn all apart? How many
fathers gave up their Sons for Me? Only One did that for me
- IX) Jesus is the *ultimate* sign and ultimate wisdom of God
This is revealed in the Gospel of Salvation through Jesus

- I) The gospel message must not be tainted with man's philosophy
Man's philosophy would **empty the gospel** of its power to save
Trying to make the gospel intellectually stimulating, philosophically appealing or culturally relevant without sharing **its actual message empties it of power**
- II) The gospel message is to be preached as it has been revealed
To add anything to it or take anything from it makes it ineffective
- III) Spurgeon: I believe we slander Christ when we think we are **to draw the people by something else** but the preaching of Christ crucified