

# 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

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Date: 31 August 2025

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good evening. Good evening. I feel like I should address something this evening before I get started.!

There's a laser pointer found on me. If it's found on my nose, I'm going to climb up on your shoulders and preach.

Anyway, we'll be in the New Testament this evening. I think it's good to have fun. I think the Lord wants us to laugh. A lot of people have Christ painted in their minds as a man who's just serious all the time.

The man was human. If you think that he didn't have fun once in a while, if you think that he didn't smile. I'm not talking about telling dirty jokes or anything along those lines.

But you know, while I was here, he was truly man, truly God. And being truly man, he had emotions. We know that from the Scriptures. One of those emotions being happiness.

[ 1 : 19 ] So, you know, I find it hard to believe that he was serious all the time. I think he and the disciples joked around a lot. They may have even poked at each other sometime.

Yeah. But, you know, I think it's good for us to have fun sometime. Amen. Anyway, we'll be in the book of 1 Corinthians in the first chapter this evening. This sermon actually began in 1 Corinthians in the 15th chapter.

And that changed actually last night. So that's okay. A very simple message. A very simple gospel message. And there's no other message, is there, than the gospel of Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians, Paul addresses many, many things throughout the book of 1 Corinthians. But in the beginning verses of this, we'll be picking up in verse 18 here very shortly.

But in the first 17 or so verses of 1 Corinthians in chapter 1, we, of course, find a greeting from Paul, which was the way he started all of his letters.

[ 2 : 26 ] And he commends the church for, you know, some things that they have done. He tells the church basically that they're, you know, God has helped them. God has moved on them. They're not lacking in speech.

They're not lacking in knowledge. They're not lacking in spiritual gifts. And he commends them for these things. But then he begins to rebuke them somewhat. Because there was some division within the church at Corinth.

And some of them were saying, you know, well, I'm of this one. And I'm of that one. You know, I'm of Cephas. I'm of Apollos. I'm of, you know, this. And this is actually where I found one of the funnier terms in all the New Testament.

I believe in verse 14 you find Brother Paul say, I thank God that I didn't baptize any of them. And I don't think he was trying to be funny. But me, I find that funny.

He says, otherwise, you know, you throw me into that mix. But anyway, we find this division in Paul's rebuke of it.

[ 3 : 26 ] But his rebuke ends in verse 17. He says, For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel. Not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made, be made of none effect.

So this is, he says, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ be made of none effect. In other words, it be rendered useless. You know, if I tried to pretty it up, folks, there is no polishing the gospel.

There is no changing the gospel. There's people trying to change it all the time. We know that. We know that. If you've lived in the world for any amount of time, and if you've been in church any amount of time, you've sat under good, sound preaching for any amount of time, you know when someone is changing the gospel.

Or when someone should say, has made an attempt to change the gospel. You know, worship this cross. Worship that cross. You all have heard me say, there's many Christ's that the world will have you to believe in.

But there is only one Christ, and that is the Christ of this Bible. And he is the only Christ with the power to save. So all that being said, in 1 Corinthians 1, beginning at verse 18, it says, For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

[ 4 : 41 ] For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world?

Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God.

It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom.

But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. And we will end our reading right there, back to verse 18 in 1 Corinthians 1.

[ 5 : 42 ] He says, For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. Folks, he is contrasting two different groups of people in this one, and the one that is to them that perish foolishness. And he says, For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. And as I've already said, you know, we live in a world, we live in a day, and we live in a time where people will mock and they will scoff at the preaching of the cross.

And in doing that, they are mocking and scoffing at the gospel of Jesus Christ. He says, For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. Folks, he is contrasting two different groups of people in this one statement here.

Two people, those that are perishing and those that are being saved. That's the only two groups of people that were around 2,000 years ago when Brother Paul wrote this letter to the church at Corinth.

And that's the only two groups of people that there are right now on planet earth is those that are perishing and those that have believed the gospel of Jesus Christ, repented of their sin, repented of their wickedness, and received salvation by the hand of God through Jesus Christ.

This is the only two groups that were then, and it's the only two groups that are now for the preaching of the cross. It's to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God.

[ 6 : 59 ] It is foolishness to the world. It is foolishness to think that a perfect God, a sinless God, would have sent His only begotten Son into the world to suffer a cruel death on a tree, on a hill called Calvary.

It is foolishness to the world to think of this thing. It was foolishness to the Jews. It was scandalous to the Jews to have that thought because in the Old Testament, it says, Cursed is every man that hangeth upon a tree.

And it's an offense unto the Greeks because they depend upon their own wisdom. They depended upon their own pride. They depended on their own intellect. And folks, it is no different in this day, in this time, in this age which we live right now.

People are depending upon their own selves. They're depending upon their own brains, upon their own hearts. And even though the Bible says in the book of Jeremiah, the heart is deceptive above all things and desperately wicked.

Who can know it? Even though the Bible says this, people are still depending upon themselves and their heart, their emotions and anything and everything that you can depend upon. But folks, the only thing we can depend upon for salvation, the only thing that we can trust in you, the only hope that this entire world has is the hope of Jesus Christ.

[ 8 : 14 ] It is Christ crucified, buried and resurrected and forever sitting at the right hand of the majesty, making intercession for all of those that have repented of their sin, believed on the gospel and trusted in him and him alone for their salvation.

Hallelujah. This is the Christ of the Bible. And this is the Christ that is able to save. The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. It is foolishness to think of this sort of thing.

Folks, it was foolish to me before I was saved. Before I was saved, I can tell you exactly what I told people. I don't need some book telling me how to live. I don't need a book telling me what's right and wrong.

I already know what's right and wrong. But folks, the Bible even prophesied that in the Old Testament. God said he would write his law upon the hearts of men. He would write his law upon everyone.

That's your conscience. We know right from wrong. You know good from evil. You know right from dark. You know it's wrong to steal. You know it's wrong to lie.

[9:16] Even before you do it. But we do it anyway. We break the laws of God. We break the laws of God. We have transgressed against the laws of God.

We have broken the laws of God. And there is a just punishment for breaking said law against the thrice holy God creator of the universe. And that is eternity in a place called hell.

That is eternal death. That is the second death that the book of Revelation speaks of. That is a just and a right and a holy punishment from a just and a right and a holy God. People say well what God what God of love would do that?

A God that is just and a God that is holy and a God that cannot stand sin and he will not tolerate sin. And sin must be punished in the eyes of this God. The God of the scriptures. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

He is holy. He is righteous. And he will not let sin go unpunished. And I have said many times. Jesus Christ took the wrath of God upon himself.

[10:19] That you and I may not ever know what the wrath of God feels like. Jesus suffered the wrath of God. Jesus suffered the punishment that you and I deserve. It was you that deserved the mocking. It was you that deserved the scourging.

And me as well. We all deserved it. We all deserved to be beaten. We all deserved to be crucified. And we all deserved to be in hell right now at this very moment. But thanks be to God for the hope that we have in Jesus Christ.

Amen. So. The gist of all this. Are you of those that are perishing? Are you of those that are saved? The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness.

But unto us which are saved is the power of God. The cross of Jesus Christ. And Christ himself of course. Folks that cross. If Christ had never died upon it.

Would be of none effect. Just as it said there in verse 17. It would do us no good. If Jesus Christ had come here. And lived to be a ripe old age. And killed over dead of a heart attack. It would have done you and I no good.

[11:19] Scripture from the Old Testament would not have been fulfilled. There would have been no blood shed. We all know from the book of Hebrews. That without the shedding of blood. There is no remission. If Jesus Christ had died of natural causes.

You and I would still yet be in our sins. With no hope for salvation. But Jesus Christ fulfilled the Old Testament scriptures. As far as the prophecies of his birth. As far as the prophecies of his life.

As far as the prophecies of his miracles. The prophecies of his death. As far as all these go. He fulfilled every one. Every jot. And every tittle. Now there are still some prophecies that have not happened yet.

But folks I can promise you. If God said it is going to happen. It will happen. It will happen in God's good time. Verse 19. For it is written. I will destroy the wisdom of the wise. The wisdom of the wise. And will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Paul reaches all the way back to the book of Isaiah right now. A few hundred years before Paul is writing this. Isaiah wrote this in Isaiah chapter 29.

[12:17] It says for it is written. I will destroy the wisdom of the wise. And will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. And God has done that through the cross of Jesus Christ.

He has destroyed the wisdom of the wise. But folks. This isn't the only time that God ever destroyed the wisdom of the wise. Y'all remember the flood. That we read about in Genesis chapter 6.

Through chapter 8.

If you flip on over just a couple of more chapters. To Genesis chapter 11. You read about the entirety of planet earth. The entire population of planet earth. Was in rebellion against God.



[16:29] He says here, He says, Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? And He puts that in a question. And the answer is an emphatic yes. God has completely made foolish the wisdom of the world.

Now folks, you and I, if we ain't careful, we'll be in this same boat. You and I will depend on self. We'll depend on our own smarts. We'll depend on our own brains. I've seen that get many a preacher in trouble in the pulpit.

Folks, we preach. We preach Christ and we preach Him crucified. We preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And let the Holy Spirit do His work. Let God do His work.

Let the Scripture do its thing. But only the Holy Spirit can prick hearts with conviction. Only the Holy Spirit can open up hearts. Show people their need for a Savior. It took me probably about a year to get that because I couldn't understand when I first started preaching why people weren't flooding the altars and getting saved.

I didn't understand why people didn't have more tears flowing down their cheeks until I read that verse in Romans chapter 1 where Paul says, For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation.

[17:43] It had nothing to do with me. It had nothing to do with the way that I was preaching. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation. If I preach the Gospel and I preach it right and I preach it true, it is up to someone to make a choice at that point whether they will go with God or whether they will go to hell.

It is a person's individual choice to do that. And that brought me great comfort once I came to that realization. Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

For after that, for after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God. It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

I know of at least three preachers here tonight, myself included. It's a foolish thing according to the world's standards for what we do. But folks, this is a glorious statement that Paul makes here.

He says, It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Why? Again, these Greeks would gather around and they would debate one another and see who made the most sense.

[18:53] See who had the most logic. See who had the most intellect. And then they would go with that person's response to any given question. But folks, that's not what it takes to be saved.

It takes a simple proclamation of the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ on behalf of sinners. That's what it takes for people to be saved.

And God chooses preaching. Not that my preaching saves and not that anyone's preaching saves, but God uses that preaching as the very instrument to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

If we go out in the world and we make the proclamation that man is a sinner, but God is a wonderful, marvelous, able, and willing Savior, hey, somebody can get saved!

Hallelujah! Right! Amen! That's all it takes is a simple proclamation. And this is what God has chosen. The God of this universe. The God that spoke everything into existence.

[19:50] The God that made it all. He made the earth. He made the sun. He made the moon. He made the stars. He made the oceans. He made the air that we breathe. He made the plants that we see. He made it all!

But He chose man and the preaching of man to be the instrument that He uses to bring people to Him. To bring people to Him.

Why would He need to bring people to Him? Folks, we were cast off in the garden. Every one of us were cast off in the garden. We were placed underneath a curse in the Garden of Eden. And folks, that's one of the beautiful things about the Gospel.

One of the most gorgeous things about the Gospel is the Gospel is as old as Eden is. Because in Genesis 3, or chapter 3, in verse 15, there was a promise made that the seed of the woman was going to bruise the head of the serpent.

That is the first Gospel promise that is found in the Scriptures. But the Gospel goes back even further than that because John saw Jesus Christ in the book of Revelation as a lamb slain before the foundation of the world.

[20:50] The plan was in place before you or I were ever even thought of. Hallelujah. God already had a Gospel plan and He has chosen to use the foolishness of preaching.

The foolishness of a man standing in a pulpit or a man standing on a street corner or a man going anywhere or a woman for that matter.

I'm not saying you ladies need to be in the pulpit. But you can tell people about the Gospel of Jesus Christ just as much. In fact, we're commanded to. The Great Commission wasn't just for men.

It was for all who believe. It was to all of us that have been saved and born again. We are to go into the world. We are to preach the Gospel to every living creature. Every one of us are to do that.

Verse 22 For the Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified under the Jews a stumbling block and under the Greeks foolishness.

[ 21 : 47 ] For the Jews require a sign. They ever had required a sign? Even in the days of Jesus Christ they were still seeking after a sign.

We can actually read that Jesus Christ told them you're seeking after a sign. You're looking for a sign. There shall be no other sign given unto you other than the sign of Jonah. For as Jonah was in the belly of the well three days and three nights so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.

But folks, this is something that the Jews sold after. And they prized these signs. And they looked for... You take John chapter 6 for instance. Jesus Christ in John 6 He feeds 5,000 people.

He feeds the 5,000 with just a little bit of bread and a few fish. What do the Jews do? They follow after Him looking for another miracle.

Christ departed because He was afraid they would seize Him and force Him to be King. But they still followed after Him. Why? Looking for another sign.

[ 22 : 51 ] They followed Him. But when Christ said I am the bread of life and He began to expound that to Him. He began to explain how He is the bread of life. Basically what He was saying and all that of the eating of His flesh and the drinking of His blood.

He was saying you must partake of Me. You must be part of Me. You must associate with Me is what Jesus Christ was telling them. The Bible says that many of those that followed turned back and followed Him no more.

They followed Him no more. after He had just performed the miracle of feeding 5,000 men women and children not included they had seen that and they sought after another sign.

The Jews were very guilty of that but folks if we ain't careful we'll do the same thing. Now listen there ain't nothing wrong with throwing a fleece out. There ain't nothing wrong with throwing a fleece out asking for confirmation if God wants you to do something or do it not.

And I'm not talking about throwing a literal fleece out if you want to do that God bless you. But there's nothing wrong with asking God for confirmation is what I'm getting at. But folks once you've gotten the confirmation don't ask them to reconfirm it.

[ 24 : 01 ] Don't ask them to reconfirm it. You go you do what God called you to do. Go and do it. Do it to the glory of God. Whether you eat or whether you drink whatsoever you do do it to the glory of God.

Everything that we do should be to the glory of God but we preach Christ or I'm sorry I ain't finished with verse 22 yet am I? For the Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom. We've kind of already covered all that.

How they prized all their philosophers and all things like this. You can take every great mind that we know. You can take Einstein in more recent times.

You can go back to Aristotle. You can go back to Plato. You can take every great mind that the world has ever known. Everybody that had a good brain had some smarts about them.

had some intellect about them. You combine them all together and as compared I should say to Almighty God they are absolutely ignorant and stupid.

[ 25 : 00 ] Right. The wisdom of God is what we're talking about here. But the cross of Jesus Christ is a stumbling block to the Jew. It's a stumbling block to the Jew.

and it's foolishness to the Greek. Verse 23 but we preach Christ crucified. We preach Christ crucified.

Let me reiterate that. We preach Christ crucified. Why is this such a crazy notion to the world? Folks, the world is looking for a Savior.

The world looks for salvation. They look for it granted in all the wrong places. But they look for salvation and they look for a Savior. But we preach a crucified Savior.

Why is that? Because this crucified Savior if you would have seen Him on Calvary's Hill up there bleeding up there naked as He was up there with His guts hanging out up there with the gaseous on Him all the things that were going on with Jesus Christ you would have looked at Him and said this is a defeated man.

[ 26 : 08 ] But folks, it wasn't defeat at all. It wasn't defeat for Christ. This was all part of the perfect plan of a perfect God. Jesus Christ hanging there on that cross suffering, bleeding, and dying for you and I was the culmination of what it was going to take for salvation to be offered to Jew and Greek alike.

It was the culmination of this. It was the culmination that it was the beginning of salvation for all of mankind for everyone who had believed up to that point and everyone that would believe on into the future.

This is the Messiah that Abraham believed in. This is the Messiah that was promised in Genesis 3 what we've already covered. In the Old Testament folks, they had no clue who Jesus Christ was. They didn't know the name Jesus Christ but they knew there was a Messiah promised. And this is the Messiah that was promised. But what were the Jews wanting? Not only were they wanting a sign but they were wanting a Savior that would save them immediately.

That would save them physically. That would take the oppressive foot of Rome up off of their back and they would restore Israel to their former glorious state. That's what the Jews were looking for.

[ 27 : 18 ] And the Greeks, my goodness, they were looking for all kinds of things. Just like the world is nowadays. Just like the world is nowadays. They look for this and they look for that. And they are told different things.

They are told, as I've already said, of different Christ. They are told of different Gospels. Folks, there is only one Gospel and there is only one Christ. And there is only one Gospel that is the power of God and the salvation.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ. We preach Christ crucified. Folks, if we preach a Christ that was not crucified, we preach a false Christ. Just as much if we preach a Gospel that doesn't include repentance, we preach a false Gospel.

Jesus Christ said in Mark in chapter 1, He said, the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of heaven is at hand, repeat me and believe the Gospel. Repentance.

Repentance is a must. And you say, that sounds like work salvation. If you truly believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ, if you truly believe that Jesus Christ died for your sins and that He's coming back one day as judge, that will force you into a state of repentance if you truly believe it.

[ 28 : 23 ] If you don't truly believe it, there won't be any repentance in your life. And again, you'll be yet in your sins if that is the case. We preach Christ crucified unto the Jews of stumbling block and unto the Greeks foolishness.

But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God. Unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, God calls them all.

The Greeks were not left out and the Jews were not left out. I've said it before from this pulpit. I'll say it again. You ever run into a true blue Jew walking down the sidewalk, you need to grab them, hug them, kiss them on the head and thank them because had they accepted Christ when He came, you and I as Gentiles will be sitting here with no hope for salvation whatsoever.

We need to thank them for that. He came unto His own and His own received Him, not His own being the Jewish people. Had they accepted Him, folks, there would be no hope for us.

There would be no hope for us being Gentile. And I can look out across this audience tonight and see there ain't a Jewish person sitting in here. And I'm not saying that as a racial comment or anything along them lines, but you can tell such things.

[ 29 : 40 ] But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God. Christ, the power of God. The power of God under what? Under salvation. Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

He's not only the power of God and the strength of God, but it is a show of the wisdom of Almighty God. As I've already said, the world will take anything that they can and say, this must be the way of salvation or that must be the way of salvation.

There are so many folks on YouTube now, so many folks on Instagram and Facebook and TikTok and any of those other social media places that you can think of that are trying to convince people of things that simply are not.

But they're convincing people. They're convincing people left and right. I saw a video just a couple weeks ago of a man on Instagram saying that what we commonly refer to as the Lord's Prayer wasn't meant for Gentile people.

Well, how do you figure that? I mean, he showed it to me in the Scripture and I'll preach it myself. But it's not there. It's not there. And he was cherry-picking Scripture to prove his point.

[ 30 : 51 ] Folks, be careful what you listen to. Be careful who you listen to. Unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Christ is both of these. But Christ, and listen, Christ is Creator, is He not? Christ is God. I mean, the Bible makes that very plain.

And I'm not preaching oneness here. I believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. But Christ is, according to what I can read in my Bible. And that's what the Bible teaches and that's what I'll stand on.

But Christ is the power of God and He is the wisdom of God. And this wisdom and this power and this strength confounds and confuses and offends the world.

Because the world wants to look at it just like I used to. Just like I said, I don't need this and I don't need that back before I was saved. And that's what the world says. They want to make their own way.

[ 31 : 48 ] They say, my way is better. But folks, the Bible makes it very plain. God says, your ways are not my ways. My ways are higher than your ways. And His ways are higher than my ways.

And I'm glad. I'm glad that God doesn't listen to me whenever I argue with Him like Brother Mike was talking about a little while ago. God don't listen to me.

God knows better. Right. And God knows who's going to win too. And I know who's going to win and I do it anyway like an idiot. Amen. Yeah. Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God because the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men. Yeah. Think about that verse. The foolishness of God is wiser than men. Is there any foolishness with God? I wouldn't think so. But what Paul is getting at here is the way man would perceive that. Yeah. The way man would perceive it. And he says, the foolishness of God is wiser than men. Wiser than any of us. Yeah. Wiser than the greatest mind that has ever lived outside of Jesus Christ, of course.

[ 32 : 57 ] Because Christ was God. But, the foolishness, excuse me, the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Yeah. I praise God that in His perfect wisdom and in His perfect strength and His perfect power that He made a way through the cross that I could be saved and that you could be saved and that anyone whosoever is a thirst let him come and drink and take of the water of life freely.

Oh, He is a thirst. Let him come by wine and milk without money. Yeah. Without Christ. Right. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered.

According to Joel chapter 2. I'll reiterate that in Romans 10, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Right. I thank God. Amen. That He has made a way through the cross of Jesus Christ.

Through His death. Through His suffering. That I could be saved. That you could be saved. And that honestly the entire world could be saved. And I thank God that it is something as simple as the foolishness of preaching Yeah.

[ 34 : 10 ] that God uses to draw men unto Himself. Yeah. Wonderful. But not just men. Draw lost men unto Himself. Amen. Christ said, He that is not sick has no need of a physician.

If you ain't sick you don't need a doctor. But folks, those of us that realize I've got a sickness. I've got sin sickness. I've got a real problem. Amen.

And I need somebody to cure it. And man cannot cure it. Philosophy cannot cure it. Education cannot cure it. But there is one who came and suffered and bled and died who is the almighty cure for that sickness.

Amen. And His name is Christ Jesus. Amen. And He is Lord of Lord and King of Kings. And God in His perfect wisdom, His perfect power, and His perfect strength has chosen the foolishness of preaching as the instrument to be used to draw lost sinners unto Himself.

So again, I ask the question, are you of those that are perishing? Are you of those that are saved? Again, for the preaching of the cross is of them that perish foolishness.

[ 35 : 20 ] But unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. I thank God for the preaching of the cross. I thank God for the cross in general. I thank Him for the preaching of the cross.

Amen. I thank Him for the resurrection. I thank Him for intercession. I thank Him for mediation. I thank Him for all these things. But folks, if someone had not preached the gospel of Jesus Christ into my ears, I would not be saved right now.

because that is the instrument of salvation that God made. It's not salvation, but it's the instrument of salvation. There have been plenty of people walking to church services and hear the gospel preached and walk right up still lost.

Right. Yeah. So the preaching of the gospel is not salvation. Right. But the preaching is the instrument that God uses. Right.