

August 30, 2020 ~ 1Corinthians 1:18-25,

Part Two: Is the Message of the Cross Foolishness?

Read **1Corinthians 1:18-25**... Why do the majority of people who live on the earth reject God's greatest Gift: forgiveness for sins and eternal life through Jesus Christ the Lord? Because most of the world rejects God, Jesus Christ, and the Bible, and they also despise Christians, i.e., believers and followers of Christ.

John 15:18-19, "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you."

2Timothy 3:12-13, "Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived."

Hebrews 9:27-28, "And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this *comes* judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many [not all, or even most, but many] will appear a second time for salvation without *reference to sin*, to those who eagerly await Him."

In order to be saved, a person must own up to and repent of their sins, confessing Christ as Lord, believing in Him as Savior. But the majority of people who live on earth, do not acknowledge the damning consequences of their own sinfulness; instead, they justify themselves by postulating that, God [if He does exist] wouldn't condemn them to hell for just doing what comes natural to humans [if there is a hell], after all, if God created us this way why would He punish us.

When Jesus began His earthly ministry (cf. **Mark 1:15, 17**), He made it very clear that we must "Repent (of our sin), believe (in Him for salvation), and then follow Him (obeying God's Word in and through our life).

The message of the cross is not foolish, it is God's sovereign, infallible, inerrant, and eternal truth. Mankind apart from the saving grace of God through Christ, is not just foolish, but are separated from the life of God and dead in their sins.

Psalms 14:1, "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'"

But honestly, we were all fools prior to believing in Christ (**Ephesians 2:1-3**), "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air (the Devil), of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest."

In **Genesis 3:15**, God speaks to the serpent (Satan incarnate) saying, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed."

In **Matthew 3:17**, when Jesus was being baptized by John, God the Father said, ""This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." In **Matthew 17:5**, when Jesus was transfigured on the mountain, God the Father said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"

John 6:28-29, "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God [what God requires], that you believe in Him whom He has sent." **40**, "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life..."

John 8:24, "I said to you that you will die in your sins... ..unless you believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins."

John 10:30, "I and the Father are one."

John 14:7, "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."

1John 5:11-13, "And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life."

The message of the cross, the gospel of Christ, is anything but foolish... **Romans 1:16**, "it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes." God turns no one away, but all humanity has turned away from

God (**Romans 3:10-12**), as it is written [Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3], "There is none righteous, not even one; There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God; All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, There is not even one."

And yet (**Romans 10:13**), "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord [for the forgiveness of sin] will be saved."

1Timothy 2:3-4, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

2Peter 3:9, "The Lord is... ..patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."

The Message of the Cross is Way of Salvation, as Jesus said (**John 14:6**), "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father [who is in heaven] but through Me."

2Corinthians 9:15, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"

In **Acts 4**, Peter and John are on trial for healing a man (lame from birth). Peter declares (**verse 10**), "Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this name this man stands here before you in good health." **12**, "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved" [only Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior: Crucified, Resurrected, and Coming Again].

Read **1Corinthians 1:19-21**... The Wisdom of this age is foolishness [*moronic*] to God. Paul challenges his readers. Where are the wise teachers and debaters of this world? Do they really believe they are equipped to discern the ways and wonders of God? Human wisdom cannot obtain the knowledge of God, nor can it bring acceptance by God, let alone salvation from God; for God's ways are so much higher than man's. God's thoughts confound the wisdom of the world.

No wonder we are commanded (**Romans 12:2**), "[to] not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of [our] mind, so that [we] may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable

and perfect.”

Read **1Corinthians 1:22-25...** Unbelieving Jews sought more miracles, even though they had been exposed repeatedly to the divine nature of Christ’s power and wisdom through His words and His works (see **Matthew 12:38-42**).

Jesus tells the self-righteous religious leaders of the Jews that the Gentiles of Nineveh, who responded to God’s message through Jonah, will stand in judgment against the generation of Jews who witnessed, yet rejected, the Messiah, God the Son, Creator and Judge over all.

According to **Matthew 12:42**, the Queen of the South (Queen of Sheba, Joel 3:8; Jeremiah 6:20) will stand in judgement against “this generation of Jews.” During Solomon’s reign, this Gentile woman, an Arab, came “from the ends of the earth” [1200 miles SE of Israel] in order to hear Solomon speak God’s wisdom; but Jesus says, “Something greater than Solomon is here.” Jesus isn’t just speaking God’s Wisdom, He is providing Salvation - forgiveness from sin and eternal life - and yet the Jews refused to receive Him.

The Jews had been set apart by God. He had given them the patriarchs and the prophets, He had lived among them in the Tabernacle of Meeting, in the Holy of Holies of the Temple; and they had received over a millennium of protection and provision from God; and yet, when God sent His own Son to bring them forgiveness and eternal life, they rejected Him.

One day those Jews (and everyone who rejects Christ) will stand before God condemned at the judgment; and yet, many Jews and Gentiles will be justified before God because they believed in God’s One and Only Son.

Salvation can’t be acquired through ancestral heritage, good works, or religious rituals. And although the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing (those who reject God’s Son), it is the plan, and the provision, and the power of God for salvation to everyone who repents, believes, and follows Jesus Christ: crucified, resurrected, and coming again.

This the pow'r of the cross,
Christ became sin for us,
took the blame, bore the wrath

we stand forgiven at the cross.

It is that kind of foolishness that will light up your life and put peace in your heart for eternity!

Pastor Mike

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