

Our Foolishness, God's Wisdom

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Wednesday Bible Class / Wisdom; Foolishness; Paradox / James 4:10; 1 Corinthians 1:18–31

God's foolishness is man's salvation.



OUR FOOLISHNESS GOD'S WISDOM

Paradoxes of the Bible
James 4:10; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

James 4:10 *ESV*

¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

1 Corinthians 1:18–31 *ESV*

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.”

Our Foolishness, God's Wisdom

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.

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ 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; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?

Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

Sixteen times in 1 Corinthians 1–2, Paul uses the word "wisdom," and five times he uses the word "foolishness."

To the World, God's Wisdom Is Foolishness

1 Corinthians 1:18 ESV

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.

Galatians 6:14 ESV

Our Foolishness, God's Wisdom

¹⁴ But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Galatians 2:20 ESV

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

1 John 1:7 ESV

⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

Proverbs 14:12 ESV

¹² There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.

Psalms 14:1 ESV

¹ The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."
They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds;
there is none who does good.

Wisdom is the right use of knowledge, making the most of God's gifts as He commanded us, all for His glory.

Psalms 127:1 ESV

¹ Unless the LORD builds the house,
those who build it labor in vain.
Unless the LORD watches over the city,
the watchman stays awake in vain.

To God, the World's Wisdom Is Foolishness

Romans 1:21–22 ESV

Our Foolishness, God's Wisdom

²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools,

Idolatry thrives on ignorant unbelief, while the worship of the true and living God thrives on faith and obedience.

Matthew 5:3 ESV

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Proverbs 11:2 ESV

² When pride comes, then comes disgrace,
but with the humble is wisdom.

Joshua 3:7 ESV

⁷ The LORD said to Joshua, "Today I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.

"No sin cuts us off so effectively from God and our fellow man as the sin of pride,"

For Christians, God's Foolishness Is True Wisdom

We who are Christians must live as "wise fools."

We don't push people into the kingdom headfirst; we pray them into the kingdom heart first.

Acts 1:8 ESV

Our Foolishness, God's Wisdom

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

We must not depend on clever approaches in presenting the gospel but only on the ministry of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2).

The world's wisdom mixed with the gospel robs the message of its power (1 Cor. 1:18–23)

1 Corinthians 4:10 ESV

¹⁰ We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute.