

GOD'S FOLLY

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5

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Take-Home Truth: The message of the cross doesn't measure up to man-centered "wisdom," but it is the only message that has the power to transform lives.

1. GOD'S "FOLLY": SENDING A CRUCIFIED CHRIST.

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate."

1 Corinthians 1:18-19 (New International Version)

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? ²¹For 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. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³but we preach Christ crucified a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

1 Corinthians 1:20-25 (English Standard Version)

For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God . . . 1 Peter 3:18a (New American Standard Bible)

For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them . . . ²¹For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:19a, 21 (New Living Translation)

2. GOD'S "FOLLY": CHOOSING "NOBODIES" AS BELIEVERS.

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. ²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 (ESV)

3. GOD'S "FOLLY": USING PREACHING DEVOID OF SELF-RELIANCE OR ELOQUENCE.

And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. ²For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, ⁴and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 (ESV)