1 Corinthians Chapter 1 Verses 18

* The ***verb tenses*** in this statement are **interestingly important.** Literally, in the Greek, what is said here is that *the message of the cross is foolishness* to who are not just perishing **in the end** but ***currently in the process right now!*** Same for those that are saved. Paul says, those that are ***being*** saved! Not just saved and sealed in the end, but currently in the process of salvation. That’s truly what those two *states* are. On the one hand, the rejection of Jesus creates this ***decaying process*** in the heart of a person…the word in the Greek is harsh for perishing…it’s literally ***to be ruining.*** But on the other hand, for the person that has received Jesus, there is a healing process going on which will *culminate* in the defeat of death. The power of God.
* Paul says that **the message of the cross** is the gospel to be preached (reference verse 17). ***That’s the gospel.*** Preaching health and wealth is not the gospel. Preaching traditions or high moral standard is not he gospel. **The gospel is the message of the cross period.** That is what has washed away our sin. That is what alone has the power to save. But that is indeed, in worldly terms, certainly in the day that Paul wrote this, is ***foolishness!***
* Today the impact and shock of the cross is lost. We wear crosses for fashion but then and for hundreds of years after this it was considered extremely poor taste to depict a cross! The cross meant nothing but ***shame and execution.*** Today it’s almost cool to rock a cross tattoo but here’s the thing…what is lost on the symbolism today. The gospel is not a **Christ.** That’s not foolishness at all to the world. A Savior, a Hero, a Blesser, a debt Payer…but the gospel is a ***Christ crucified!*** What’s the difference? Wear the cross, and then when you get offended or shamed, there it is.
* Folks rep Jesus and then post about how they are so offended by this politician or that celebrity or perhaps have a shouting match with their spouse over where to go eat! But the gospel and the symbol of the cross is that ***salvation came through accepting shame***…***foolishness to those that are perishing or Christians playing the perishing game***…but the power of God to those who have given all to the Lord!

1 Corinthians Chapter 1 Verses 19 – 25

* Paul speaks rather poetically here because the implication he is slipping in is that ***God has neither foolishness nor weakness.*** All of that is on the person of man, not God. We can see examples of this all over our world today. If the No. 2 pencil is the best then why isn’t it No. 1? Why do we press harder on the remote control when the batteries are dying? Why do *“fat chance”* and *“slim chance”* mean the same thing!? Why do British people **never** sound British when they sing?! HA!!
* Ok for real though, we point missiles at each other and because they’re not fired, we call it *“peace.”* Jesus said in Matthew 19:4, *“Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female*,’” and yet currently today we have 63 genders! And that causes all kinds of insanity! Today, facts are no longer important! Narrative and opinion is all the rage! ***Subjective narrative is rapidly replacing the hard truth of reality!***
* The “disputer of this age” is just that. Someone or an entire society that wants to dispute everything and every issue rather than just simply accept the simple truth of reality. **You know who could clear this all up? My 9 year old!** Take him to the world stage! Ask him if it’s ok to kill unborn children! Point a weapon at someone and don’t fire it and ask him if that’s peace. He would clear all of this up for us! I should ask HIM about the wall! ***But the wisdom of man has so very much decayed and is decaying!*** Listen, while everyone states their opinion and needs to be heard and the conversation goes on and on and on and on…SO MANY WORDS…., there is no wise man, no thinker, no debater, no *“opinionator”* that can do what Jesus Christ has done alone!
* The Jews regarded *“Christ crucified”* as a **stumbling block.** The Greeks regarded *“Christ crucified”* as a **joke**…but the truth was then as it is now, ***God does not respond and in no way is swayed or affected or changed by the popular polls.*** The world we live in and the world Paul was dealing with in Corinth, there is nothing new under the sun! Even in Rome! Romans 1:18-25! Let the media preach what sells. Let the **vast minority** wrap themselves around the political rudder of the world and turn the entire ship while the devil dons the captain’s hat…in the end, all they that disregard **Christ crucified** will *still* be without excuse.

1 Corinthians 1 Verses 26 – 29

* I think the preaching on this passage has been ***imprecise.*** With surgical accuracy I’d like to ask you to remember that phrase, *“according to the flesh.”* Paul isn’t saying here for you or I or any Christian to be **proud** of some sort of *intellectual weakness or lack of nobility or pedigree!* ***The foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise*** are **not** necessarily *people*…the foolish things of the world that Paul is talking about are *the cross, the message of the cross and the reality of sin* **that man in his infinite wisdom cannot in any way overcome!** That fact right there is what sends every person to hell. Folks don’t go to hell because of sin. All sin has been dealt with and paid for at the cross…***folks go to hell because they reject the payment!***
* The truth is that if your heart is to be rich towards the world, wise and noble and mighty in the eyes of those that are lost, then you will have an issue desiring to be rich towards God! All that is perishing in exchange for what cannot perish…*young, old, educated, rich, poor, common or celebrity*…**you’re wise!** Open your heart to the filling and presence of the Almighty God? You’re right then and there forever more, **mighty!** Walk freely into the inheritance of the King of kings? You’re at that moment, **the most noble!** But not of yourself….not according to the flesh…but it’s all because of God’s great love and God’s great character of grace that no flesh **SHOULD** glory in His presence!
* The mighty, the wise, the noble within the Body of Christ…seek not their own…but rather to honor the God that has embraced them through mercy and washed them clean for all eternity through His grace!

1 Corinthians Chapter 1 Verse 30a

* God has called the ***simple***, why? Because truly the message given to be preached is **entirely simple.** No flesh can glory! Salvation is not of *intelligence* or *intellectual understanding*. It is a work of grace through faith…a decision to believe. Weigh the evidence, seek for yourself, find your answer. **The work is by His hand, not mans.**  The message is so simple and foreign to this world. Heaven is not to be earned, it is not to be attained to unto enlightenment…all of these things are me/you centered…***the call from heaven to earth is simply to be in Christ Jesus!***

1 Corinthians Chapter 1 Verses 30 – 31

* ***Jesus is the wisdom of God put on display.*** Often in contradiction to man’s expectation but the strength to forgive greatly overpowers the strength required to punish. The strength to give love greatly overpowers the strength required to give hate. The strength to offer grace and unconditional acceptance greatly overpowers the strength it requires to take your ball and go home…divide. The strength to pray and receive shame in this world greatly overpowers the strength it takes to *“speak your mind”* especially with obscenity and aggression on social media. ***The strength and wisdom of all eternity is found in humility, service and grace***…and that strength is hulk sized compared to the puny human strength required to walk by sight.
* And from that strength, from that heart of God flows ***righteousness***…right into your life, man. First righteousness **to** you and then righteousness **through** you! Then sanctification…first **to** you and then **through** you! Redemption, first **to** you and then **through** you…***and then your original design returns…you, even you, your life, glorifies God Almighty!***