



Title: Christ, the Power and Wisdom of God (First Corinthians #4)

Text: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

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Intro: That God would choose to save sinners through the humility of the Cross of Christ is utter foolishness to this world. But, as Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, God displays his power and wisdom over the folly of this world through death and resurrection of Jesus.

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."

1. The Cross divides all people into those who are perishing and those who are being saved.

- Contrast this with how our culture looks at Christianity. It is seen as a sort of optional add on—something you tack on to your life for improvement.
- What if you realize you are perishing? What can you do? Turn from sin and self-righteousness (repentance) and trust in Jesus' work (faith). Commit yourself to a church where the Bible is taught. Look for fruit in your life which is evidence of a new heart. Does not mean you will not still struggle with sin. No. In fact, you may struggle even more now because you will realize more clearly what sin is.

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.

2. The Cross bridges the gap between law and grace.

A. The purpose of the Law.

- To frustrate us so that we will throw our hands up and say "I Can't Do It!"

B. Jesus fulfills the law for those who believe in him.

- Romans 8:3

C. How do you know if you are one of these?

- Do you love Jesus? Have you turned from sin and trusted in Christ alone? Do you desire to live for him and please him? This doesn't mean you are now sinless, but that you are pursuing him and his ways.

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.

3. The Cross smashes human pride.

A. Think about how you came to know the Lord if you are a Christian.

B. Why is so hard for rich, talented, pretty people to truly know Jesus?

- Because they so easily trust in themselves and their riches or talents!
- 1 Timothy 6:17-19

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."

4. The Cross means our only boast and hope is in Jesus.

A. He did all the saving. God interrupted our sprint towards hell.

B. The utter sufficiency of Christ.

1. Righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21)
2. Sanctifying (Philippians 1:6; 1 Thess 5:23)
3. Redemption—our payment.

C. Realizing this is again and again is good for your growth in Jesus.

- The Gospel doesn't just save us, it grows us.
- It should cause us to worship Jesus.
- It should cause our hearts to burn within us and long to love him more.

D. Realizing this again and again makes us give off an aroma of Christ that He uses to draw people to Jesus.