



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

I CORINTHIANS 1:17-31

LESSON: TRUE WISDOM — March 13, 2022

INTRODUCTION:

CHAPTER 1:11-16 11The contention was so severe that they were arguing and splitting into groups, contending and quarreling over something. There were even cliques in the church, and it got back to Paul. 12There appear to have been four rival parties. (1.) Those who professed to follow Paul. (2.) Those who professed to follow Apollos. (3.) Those who professed to follow Cephas. 4. Those who professed to follow Christ. 13Three things were asked of the Corinthians: (1.) Is Christ divided? (2.) Was Paul crucified for you? (3.) Were you baptized in the name of Paul? A believer is only to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose Name has all authority. Jesus did not baptize anyone personally (Jh.4:2), but His disciples did in the Name of Jesus. 14Paul says, "I thank God that I baptized none of you", but he was led to baptize Crispus and Gaius. Crispus was the leading ruler of the Jewish synagogue at Corinth and Gaius was Paul's host when he was in Corinth. 15For no believer can rightfully accuse him of seeking to form a following or clique and baptizing them in his (Paul's) name. He's not trying to cause any division. 16Paul now recalls another he has baptized, Stephanas. He is one of the three messengers who delivered the Corinthian letter to Paul.

LESSON: I. POWER FROM GOD 1 CORINTHIANS 1:17- 25

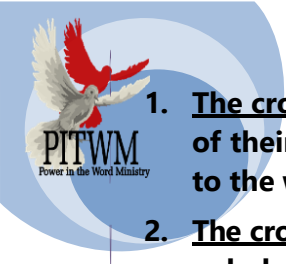
1 ST—1:17 **For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.** Paul had a pacific assignment. It was not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel, adding, not with wisdom of words; not with eloquent speech of words, but the message was to be about the cross, lest the big words spoken overshadow Christ and make Him of none effect, empty or deprived of substance. The success of the Gospel relies in the plain doctrine of a crucified Lord. It was not about being a great orator with Greek philosophy. The truth needed no artificial dress-up. It alone carries with it the "power of God unto salvation" (Rom.1:16). The Corinthians can be healed if they see the distinction of evangelizing the true mission of Christ on the cross, using God's wisdom more so than with speech that cannot be understood or received.

1 ST—1:18 **For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.** No other message has changed lives like the message of the cross of Christ. The preaching of the cross is the power of God to those who are saved. However, that preaching of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. The seed of truth fell on hard ground. They are lost and do not like the message that man is saved through a crucified Messiah. It's too simple for them! ¹They wanted God to act in ways that seem wise and powerful to them as a king would take territory, but God saves those who are willing to trust Him.

1 ST—1:19 **For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.** Since the perishing man trusts more in the wisdom of the wise, God says it is written in Isaiah 29:14c "*...for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.*" How does Jesus destroy and make foolish the wisdom of the wise? It is by the cross.

¹ <https://www.easyenglish.bible/bible-commentary/1-corinthians-lbw.htm>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>





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1. The cross exposes man's reasoning and wisdom of his achievements, for it exposes the problem of their sin, their depraved and selfish heart. Whatever the achievement you hold, it cannot hold to the weight of the cross. Jesus says, *If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto Me!*
2. The cross exposes man's search for love, joy, peace, and all the other spiritual qualities of life. It can only be found where they are least looking for it. *"For it is God who so loved the world that He gave..." "He sent His word and delivered them...."*
3. The cross shows that the answer to man's problems is the way of the sacrifice.

It's not in power and fame; selfishness and greed, nor human works and efforts, nor is it in all the books you've read. Jesus destroys and makes foolish the wisdom of the wise by His sacrifice on an old rugged cross. It's that simple in that He laid down His life for us on the cross. That's what sacrifice is: He laid down! What are we laying down? What are we putting down for God to do what He wants? Therefore, the glorious message of the cross is that God loves us enough to save us, by offering the perfect sacrifice for us. Jesus Christ, God's own perfect Son took our sins upon Himself, died, was buried, and was resurrected by the Father to bring new life; salvation to us. In this, Christ destroys the wisdom of the wise. It's not man's way. God wants us to see what sacrifice looks like, and how to do it! You know the saying *"Let Go and Let God!"*

1 ST—1:20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?— So, Paul asks the question: Where are the wise? Where are the clever teachers, and where are the ones who know how to argue shrewdly of this world? Can't you see God don't need all of that to get His message over. He only needs those who believe. So, hasn't God made foolish the wisdom of this world? In all of the world's wisdom, they still don't understand or can figure out the way or worth of the cross. They still can't figure out spiritual truth without Christ or the Spirit of God. Man can do nothing without God. What they deem valuable in this world is made foolish when they do not understand the cross.

1 ST—1:21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. It all still comes down to even with the wisdom that the wise have, they still didn't know God. *"It (literally) pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."*

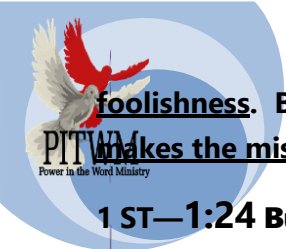
1. The wise don't know that the cross is the wisdom of God. His wisdom is the way He has chosen to save the world. That's why we are to learn the wisdom of God. Although it may seem foolish to the world, it is the key wisdom to use for those who want to be saved. We get to share that love He's given.
2. The wise still don't know that the cross is the power of God to save who believe. This power is in the utterance of the Word of God, that the world of the wise deems foolish. Their unbelief leads them away from the cross. Jesus loved much and He gave much for us upon that cross!

1 ST—1:22 For the Jews require a sign , and the Greeks seek after wisdom:— The world has made some mistakes in looking at the cross:

- The Jews or religionists of the world feel they are the chosen seed of God, but they were always looking for a sign; for a miracle; a physical wonder, then they would listen.
- The Greeks want to listen to a message that has clever ideas; flowery speech about earthly affairs; intellectual splendor, which make them seem eternal.

1 ST—1:23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;— Preaching Christ crucified to the Jews was a stumblingblock, and with the Greeks it's





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foolishness. Both found it equally difficult to accept Jesus on the cross as an eternal Savior. Generations makes the mistake of stumbling over the simplicity of the cross

1 ST—1:24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

- The called of God find Christ. This is where both Jews and Greeks discover that Christ is the power of God, and He is the wisdom of God. They discover that Jesus
 - Christ brings to their hearts and lives deliverance from the sin and restlessness of their souls.
 - He brings the knowledge of God and the infilling love, and peace He gives.
 - He brings the guidance and direction of God as they walk through the trials of life day by day.
 - He brings perfect assurance that we will live eternally with God.
 - He brings the greatest purpose and meaning in life possible, and that is, of reaching and ministering to a world that reels under the weight of calamity and desperate needs—no matter the cost.

1 ST—1:25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. The cross (the foolishness of God) proves that God’s way is wiser, and (the weakness of God) is stronger than man’s way because it saves men. When a man truly bows before the cross, he surrenders all he is and all he has to Christ, and Christ makes him into a new creature.

II. CALLING FROM GOD 1 CORINTHIANS 1:26- 29

1 ST—1:26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:— The Corinthians needed to remember who they were; to look at themselves that:

- Not many wise men after the flesh (those who pursue and live for the fleshly wisdom of this world) were called. Few of these are ever saved.
- Not many were mighty; powerful, for their earthly position and power have no bearing upon God’s acceptance of them.
- And not many noble were called. Such may be esteemed by men, but they are not esteemed by God.

Pride, self-sufficiency, self-righteousness, self-centeredness keeps men from becoming acceptable to God. Men are saved by the grace of God, not by self-effort, their wisdom, their might, or nobility. Therefore, they had no excuse for acting snobbish, or for criticizing or ignoring others.

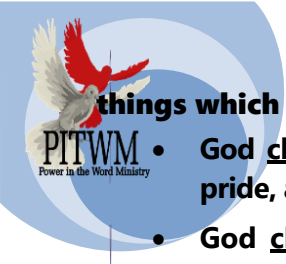
1 ST—1:27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;— God has called brethren that were not wise, mighty, nor noble, but God has “*chosen*” the foolish things. This lets us know that God takes the imitative in saving men. He knows why He chooses the simple and humble over the outstanding.

- God chooses the foolish things of this world. Why? to confound (shame) the wise. The wise with all their knowledge won’t honestly take the foolish things of this world as genuine enough to truly study or believe God in the Holy Scriptures as truth. That’s why no flesh will glory in God’s presence.
- God chooses the weak things of this world. Why? to confound (shame) the things which are mighty. The mighty that boast or have titles with their chest stuck out won’t take the weak things that God would choose. That’s why no flesh will glory in God’s presence.

The wise think selfishly and think they are able to save themselves, while God is willing to use the foolish and weak things that will give total allegiance with humility to Him.

1 ST—1:28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and





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things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:—

- **God chooses the base things** (lowly things) and **the despised things** of this world. Why? Because pride, arrogance, self-righteousness, and self-sufficiency can't stand before God.
- **God chooses the things which are of nothing;** things not up to man's standard, and use the things that seem to be nothing, to nullify (dethrone) the things that are.

1 ST—1:29 That no flesh should glory in his presence. All those who think they are something in this world, God eliminates their boasting. Why? That no flesh should glory in His presence.

III. BOASTING IN GOD 1 CORINTHIANS 1:30-31

1 ST—1:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:— "But of Him" means out of Him; out of His nature of love and salvation, God chooses "you" or "us" to be in Christ—our position is in Christ.

1. **God's real wisdom is Jesus Christ,** His only Son. God has given His wisdom to the world through His Son Jesus Christ. And through Jesus Christ:
 - God's wisdom has spoken to the world.
 - God's wisdom has revealed itself to the world.
 - God's wisdom has lived before the world in human flesh. Therefore, man now knows the way, the truth, and the life of God. So, man is without excuse.
2. **Christ is the righteousness of God.** Righteousness shows just how wise God really is. Man by his very nature can't live in God's presence, therefore, man's answer is Jesus Christ. He is the only way a man can become righteous. Jesus Christ stood before God and before the world as the perfect, ideal, sinless, and righteous Man for the unrighteous man, and covered the righteousness of every man.
3. **Christ is the sanctification of God.**
 - (a) Sanctification means to be set apart unto God. Jesus Christ set His life apart to live for God, and He lived for God perfectly and righteously. When a man believes in Jesus Christ, God takes that man's faith and counts it as one of His, as set-apart unto Him.
 - (b) Sanctification means holiness and righteous, pure, and clean life. God puts the Spirit of Christ—the very life and energy and power of Christ, who is the Holy Spirit into the heart and life of the new believer to live. As he follows in the footsteps of Christ, living more and more like Christ did, he becomes more and more sanctified day by day.
4. **Christ is the redemption of God.** When Jesus Christ died, His death became the ideal and Representative Man for all men. He was able to bear the punishment for every man's sins. And through his death, Jesus Christ redeems (delivers) us from sin, death, and punishment. He has redeemed us back to God. He is the Redeemer, the Deliverer for this world to God.

1 ST—1:31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. According as it is written, **the purpose of God sending Christ to earth was to stir men to praise God instead of boasting in their own wisdom and self-sufficiency.** *"If anyone is going to boast, let him boast only of what the Lord has done."*

SUMMARY:

17 Paul had a pacific assignment. It was not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel, adding, not with wisdom of words; not with eloquent speech of words, but the message was to be about the cross, lest the big words





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spoken overshadow Christ and make Him of none effect, empty or deprived of substance. 18No other message has changed lives like the message of the cross of Christ. The preaching of the cross is the power of God to those who are saved, but foolish to those who perish. 19Since the perishing man trusts more in the wisdom of the wise, God says it is written in Isaiah 29:14c "...for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." 20So, Paul asks the question: Where are the wise? Where are the clever teachers, and where are the ones who know how to argue shrewdly of this world? Can't you see God don't need all of that to get His message over. He only needs those who believe. So, hasn't God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21In all the wisdom that the wise have, they still didn't know God. "It (literally) pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." 22The world has made some mistakes in looking at the cross: the Jews required a sign, and the Greeks sought after wisdom. 23Generations makes the mistake of stumbling over the simplicity of the cross. Preaching Christ crucified to the Jews was a stumblingblock, and with the Greeks it's foolishness. Both found it equally difficult to accept Jesus on the cross as an eternal Savior. 24The called of God find Christ. This is where both Jews and Greeks discover that Christ is the power of God, and He is the wisdom of God, 25because the cross (the foolishness of God) proves that God's way is wiser, and (the weakness of God) is stronger than man's way because it saves men (1:17-25).

26 The Corinthians needed to remember who they were; to look at themselves in God's calling, how that not many wise men after the flesh (fleshly wisdom), not many mighty (powerful in position), not many noble (esteemed), are called, 27but God chose the foolish things of the world to confound (confuse) the wise; and God chose the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28and God choose the base things (lowly things) and the despised things of this world, and use the things which are of nothing; the things not up to man's standard, bringing to nothing, the things that are. 29All those who think they are something in this world, God eliminates their boasting. Why? That no flesh should glory in His presence (1:26-29).

30But out of Him; out of His nature of love and salvation, God chooses "us" to be in Christ—our position is in Christ. He made us acceptable to God to have wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Everything we need is in Christ, his only begotten Son! 31According as it is written, the purpose of God sending Christ to earth was to stir men to praise God instead of boasting in their own wisdom and self-sufficiency. "If anyone is going to boast, let him boast only of what the Lord has done" (1:30-31).

