

**Introduction: Review and Context**

Last Week’s Message (Church Divisions and the Call to Unity):

- Cause of division: focusing on people rather than Christ
- Desire of evangelists: for people to be connected to Christ
- The path to unity:
  - Walk in the name of Christ
  - Confess the same faith
  - Avoid quarrels
  - Be united in heart and mind in Christ

Paul’s Evangelistic Attitude (v.17):

- Preached the gospel “not with words of human wisdom”
- Reason: so that the cross of Christ would not be emptied of its power
- God’s power works through the simple message of the cross, not worldly wisdom
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**Main Points**

**1. The Truth of the Word of the Cross (v.18)**

Two responses:

- For the perishing: “foolishness”
- For the saved: “the power of God”

Tension in evangelism:

- Worry about rejection
- The gap between our joy in salvation and the world’s perception

Conclusion:

The world sees the cross as either “foolishness” or “the power of God.”

**2. Different Reactions to the Word of the Cross (vv.19–21)**

God’s Plan (quoting Isaiah 29:14):

- “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise...”
- God nullified human wisdom and understanding

Limits of human wisdom (v.20):

- “Where is the wise person? The scholar? The debater?”
- No one can explain the meaning of the cross by wisdom
- Science, philosophy, rhetoric cannot explain it

Historical ridicule:

- Graffiti of “Alexamenos worships his god” (depicted as a donkey)

Modern parallels:

- Faith is often seen as foolish

God’s Wisdom (v.21):

- The world could not know God through its wisdom
- God chose to save believers through the “foolishness of preaching”

Søren Kierkegaard’s insight:

- Faith overcomes the “offense” of the cross and resurrection
- Not by reason, but by faith

God's Sovereignty:

- Salvation comes not by human effort, but by God's initiative

### 3. Contemporary Reactions and Paul's Preaching (vv.22–24)

What people seek:

- Jews: signs (miracles)
  - Jesus answered: only the sign of Jonah (cross and resurrection)
- Greeks: wisdom (rational explanation)

Paul's proclamation (v.23):

- "We preach Christ crucified"
- Not signs or logic, but Christ on the cross

God's Call and Christ (v.24):

- To Jews: a stumbling block; to Gentiles: foolishness
- But to the called: Christ is the power and wisdom of God

Mission posture:

- Continue to preach Christ at Easter and Christmas
- Even if it seems foolish, God's call makes the cross effective

### 4. Why Follow God's Wisdom over Human Wisdom (v.25)

Struggles in evangelism:

- Pressure to be eloquent and persuasive
- Feelings of futility

The paradox of God's wisdom:

- What seems foolish to the world is God's true wisdom
- God intentionally made Christ unknowable by human wisdom

The power of God's "foolishness" and "weakness" (v.25):

- "God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom..."
- There is an overwhelming gap between God and humanity

Certainty of God's salvation:

- If God calls someone, even "foolish" words will lead them to salvation

### Conclusion: Continue to Preach the "Foolish" Gospel

No need to worry:

- Even if we speak poorly, or feel it's pointless, preach the cross of Christ

Trust God's plan:

- It's natural that the world doesn't understand—this is God's wisdom

Trust God's power and wisdom:

- Keep witnessing about Christ in simple faith

The Lord's Work:

- The Lord will save the chosen and reveal the power of the cross

Our posture:

- Rely not on our strength, but on the Lord's power—preach like Paul did