

"The Word of the Cross"
1 Corinthians 1:18-31
Good Friday, April 3, 2026

Note how Paul describes this message:

1 Corinthians 1:18 the word of the cross

1 Corinthians 1:21 the message preached

1 Corinthians 1:23 we preach Christ crucified

Paul, later on in this letter, defines the message as "*The Gospel Which I Preached.*" **1 Corinthians 15:1**

God's Plan Was The Cross! Jesus was God's Sacrifice For Our Sins, The Sins of The World. John 3:16

Substitutionary Death of Jesus – "*The reconciliation of sinful humanity to God through the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ*" **1 Corinthians 15:3**

The basic principle was the substitution of one life for another!

Atonement: *At-One-Meant*, OT sacrificial system based upon substitution.

Background of our Passage: Paul writes to A Divided Church:

The Church At Corinth Was A Defiled Church

The Church At Corinth Was A Disgraceful Church

The Church At Corinth Was A Proud Church

Thought of the Passage: "God's Wisdom Is So Wonderful And Difficult To Understand That Mankind Mistakes It For Foolishness."

1. Verses 18-21 God's Wisdom

2. Verses 22-25 Man's Choice

3. Verses 26-31 God's Instruments

1. Verses 18-21 God's Wisdom

1 Corinthians 1:18 **For the word of the cross** **Context** - Paul left off with his preaching of the gospel. The message was centered in God, not Man. **1 Corinthians 1:17**

Paul Was Commissioned To Preach The Gospel: For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel,

The Cross - is God's Witness to The Lostness of Humanity!

Attitude Of The Lost: 1 Corinthians 1:18 **For the word of the cross is foolishness** - literally "*silly, nonsense.*"

Peter proclaimed on the day of Pentecost! Acts 2:22-24 "Men of Israel, as you yourselves know—

(Heart of the Problem) "who are perishing" (Un-Saved) fail to see themselves as sinners!

Attitude of the Humble: but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. Romans 1:16

Verses 19-20 Emptiness Of Human Wisdom:

1 Corinthians 1:19 For it is written, Paul quotes from **Isaiah 29:14**

Wisdom is used 8 times in the passage. **Wisdom:** The proper application of truth. "*Hands on application of that which is right.*"

1 Corinthians 1:20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? A challenge to the possessors of so-called worldly wisdom.

Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? (Answer is YES!)

1 Corinthians 1:21 For since in the wisdom of God
Wisdom has but two sources.

Divine Wisdom – The truth and its proper application! The insight from God in doing so. **Colossians 2:3**

Human Wisdom – Humans do not know how to handle truth.

God's Remedy to Man's Lostness: God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached - This message of the gospel is looked at as foolish, but it is God's way of saving lost men.

to save those who believe. Faith in God the Son, Jesus, who died in our place, was buried, raised from the dead, the proof that the Father accepted the sacrifice!

2. Verses 22-25 Man's Choice:

1 Corinthians 1:22 For indeed Jews ask for signs, throughout the ministry of Jesus, the Jews asked for signs to be performed by Jesus.
Matthew 12:38-39

and Greeks search for wisdom; The Greek people were responsible for bringing in all the philosophies of their day.

1 Corinthians 1:23 God's Solution to Man's Lost-State Is The Gospel: but (In Contrast) we preach Christ crucified,

The Jews: to Jews a stumbling block, Jews did not want a Savior who suffered. They wanted a victorious Savior who would overthrow Rome.

When Jesus came, Israel rejected Him. John 1:11

Jews Wanted Signs of Power & Success.

Jews Had a False Concept of Salvation.

In their own minds, they didn't need a Savior. They didn't need anybody to die on the cross for them.

The Gentiles: to Gentiles foolishness, - How can a man who died bring forgiveness?

1 Corinthians 1:22 Greeks search for wisdom; "Greeks look for wisdom."

Acts 17: Paul came to Athens. **Acts 17:21**

1 Corinthians 1:24 Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Those who are being drawn by God see the power and the wisdom in Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:25 Paul goes down to the level of the people and says that God, in foolishness, is wiser than man's wisdom!

3. Verses 26-31 God's Instruments:

1 Corinthians 1:26

1 Corinthians 1:27 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world - This word **foolish** – Greek word *moros*, we get the word "*moron*," *dull or stupid.*'

to shame the wise, "*to put to shame.*"

the weak things, the base ("*low born*") **to shame the things which are strong,**

1 Corinthians 1:28-29

(N.L.T.) Ephesians 2:8-9

“In Salvation, it is the grace of God, or God Gets No Glory!”

**1 Corinthians 1:30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus,
Romans 3:10-12**

Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, - What is that wisdom? and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption.

1 Corinthians 1:31 so that, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD." This is a quote from Jeremiah 9:24

We have an all-inclusive salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, why would we want to boast in man?

Application: Romans 8:32

- 1. All Humans Are Born Sinners, Separated From God: Romans 3:23**
- 2. Our Sin Has Earned Us Death: Romans 6:23**
- 3. Jesus Loves Us and Paid For Our Sins: Romans 5:8**
- 4. Salvation Comes Through Confession And Faith In Jesus Christ: Romans 10:9-10**