



# **Lights and Perfection, Inc.**

**Go and make disciples!**

E-votional 111

## **Wise or Foolish**

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 (ESV)

*And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*

The Apostle Paul's appeal here is an intriguing one and also one that should draw some questioning in our minds today. What I mean is that here Paul is referring to how he taught and preached the Gospel. He refers to it by saying that, "*my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*" And also that he, "*decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.*"

Further, if we were to take a step back and look at another passage of Scripture in this letter to the Corinthians we would see a little more context and also gain some understanding as to what Paul meant when he said what he did here. Let's take a look.

1 Corinthians 1:18-25 (ESV),

*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. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." 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? 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. For Jews demand signs and Greeks*

*seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.*

There it is, the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. In short, those who were perishing could never truly understand the message of the cross which is the wisdom from God. Also, with this, when Paul went to proclaim the Gospel and for this reason, he chose not to use worldly wisdom when presenting it. Rather he wanted to preserve the message for what it is, the wisdom and power of God. Paul chose rather to let the Holy Spirit do the talking. He chose not to use a cleverly crafted sermon that invoked the people's emotions but wanted to present the Gospel the way it should be presented, in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Praise God!

I mentioned earlier that, *“the Apostle Paul’s appeal here is an intriguing one and also one that should draw some questioning in our minds today.”* This line of questioning should, of course, be done in prayer with the help of the Holy Spirit before I give out the question.

The question is to ask, as a believer, do I rely on the plausible speech of worldly wisdom or am I more eager to hear what the Holy Spirit has to say?

Let me explain in more detail by sharing this perspective.

We seem to live in an age where we have become so heavily reliant on an insatiable hunger for wisdom yet often times it is not the wisdom from God but the wisdom from the world. We at times think that what we crave is God’s wisdom but oftentimes if we were to be honest with ourselves we are looking more to the world to find it. And when we do find it, we begin to justify it because we think that if we somehow use it and employ it into our ministry or the church that we are the better for it.

You know, in Paul's day the Greeks who sought after wisdom were always ready to hear the next philosophy or chunk of wisdom that would somehow better their life. Paul knew this, and in context with the chosen passage still made the statements he did in light of that. He chose not to use plausible words of worldly wisdom but just presented the message in demonstration of the Spirit and power.

This Grecian culture of Paul’s day was so hungry to hear something that would better their life and that would satisfy them intellectually that they were unwilling to receive truth if it didn’t appeal to their powers of intellect. Yet again, Paul did

not change the message. God's wisdom is not like the world's wisdom.

I know I have said things along these lines before, but I feel that we as a church need to hear them again and again until we see the fulfillment of what we need to be. What I mean is that we have become so accustomed to teaching and preaching in an almost all but Spiritless way. We claim it is because we have to make the message more attractive or understandable. But Paul's response was so simple when he said, *"For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified,"* and also, *"my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."*

We really need to teach the Gospel to the lost and also teach each other the tenets of the faith in a way that allows the Holy Spirit control to speak as He desires even if it seems foolishness to our own intellect and carnal reasoning. We have gotten so used to church growth structure, worship platforms, programs, Bible studies that are only a mental exercise with no real fruit, missions that are only humanitarian, and the list goes on.

It's crazy to think about some recent events that have transpired in Christendom about a beloved teacher and apologist of God's word. This man was so powerful with God's Word and the art of being persuasive in his approach to helping others understand God's Word. Dare I say that there were no others like him in this generation. Yet, it was all a mental and intellectual exercise because the person in question was living in radical sexual sin the whole time of their ministry. The Bible is clear that someone in that stage of living in sin does not know God (and I am going to spare the graphic detail of this man's radical sexual sin).

Now, let that sink in brothers and sisters. I say that because I can also guarantee that you and I have regarded such a one as highly esteemed as a teacher of God's Word yet all the while he was not being led by the Holy Spirit. When I heard the news and did the research to find out the validity of these things, I was gut-wrenched to say the least. I say that because I wondered how I could not discern beforehand the difference. It goes to show that we have somehow misplaced our hope and understanding to various degrees in a version of the Gospel and of God's Word that is merely bent on intellectual reasoning and understanding. It is like this unhealthy craving that we have from our sin nature to know all things.

The conclusion of the matter is very simple, we need a Holy Spirit revival brothers and sisters to sweep the church if we ever think that we can gain godly

influence over the lost and over each other. We need a move of God to open our hearts to the truth of God's Word as revealed by His Spirit and not manmade doctrines and practices. In short, we need to close on what Paul said,

*And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (1 Corinthians 2:1-5 (ESV))*

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