

FOOLISH THINGS

1 Corinthians 1:18-31 (KJV) For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. [19] For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. [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? [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. [22] For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: [23] But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; [24] But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. [25] Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. [26] For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: [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; [28] And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: [29] That no flesh should glory in his presence. [30] But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: [31] That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

A few years ago, the Vancouver Sun published some absolutely foolish questions from the transcripts of courtroom cross examinations:

Q: The youngest son, the twenty-year old, how old is he?

Q: Were you present when your picture was taken?

Q: Was it you or your younger brother who was killed in the war?

Q: How far apart were the vehicles at the time of the collision?

Q: How many times have you committed suicide?

Q: Doctor, how many autopsies have you performed on dead people?

A: All my autopsies are performed on dead people.

Q: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

A: The autopsy started around 8:30 p.m.

Q: And Mr. Dennington was dead at the time?

A: No, he was sitting on the table wondering why I was doing an autopsy.

Q: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

A: No.

Q: Did you check for blood pressure?

A: No.

Q: Did you check for breathing?

A: No.

Q: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

A: No.

Q: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

A: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

Q: But could the patient have still been alive nevertheless?

A: It is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law somewhere.

Have you ever been amazed at how DUMB human beings can be? Not just about comical things – about important things. Have you ever had your child ask you a simple question about something you've spent your whole life observing, and been completely stumped?

- Why are there different kinds of clouds?
- Why can't my dog go to heaven?
- What makes the seasons change?
- Why did Grandpa have to die?

We have an amazing lack of wisdom, because wisdom is more than just knowing things. It's knowing what to do with the things you already know. It's the art of living well, living so that you and all around you benefit.

- We already know that coffee will keep us awake. We drink it at midnight anyway.
- We already know that kind words bring peace and reconciliation. We speak harsh words anyway.
- We already know that love is a choice, not a feeling. But we excuse divorce with the tired cliché, "I just don't have any feelings for my spouse any more."
- We already know that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." But we dabble in worldly behavior anyway.

Some of the smartest people in the world are among the stupidest. Journalist and historian Paul Johnson documented this in his book "Intellectuals," a collection of mini-biographies of leading thinkers over the past 200 years. These were men and women like Karl Marx, whose ideas shaped whole cultures, began revolutions and toppled civilizations. Johnson shows in every instance that these men and women possessed massive intellects but puny souls. They lacked wisdom. They were cruel, shallow, heartless and selfish.

Romans 1:22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

Romans 16:27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

In 1999, during a presidential debate, George W. Bush was asked, “Who is your favorite political philosopher?” “Jesus Christ,” he answered. This stunned the audience, and afterward the press had a field day, a carnival of mockery. In most encyclopedias of philosophy, Jesus is not listed in the roster of history’s great thinkers. Buddha makes it; Jesus does not. The irony of this is glaring, because the very word philosopher means “lover of wisdom.” Scripture describes Jesus as “the wisdom of God”!

The Bible declares that God embodies all wisdom, but here’s the catch:

Matthew 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

By His own heavenly design, God disguises His wisdom, and quite often the disguise is foolishness. God’s wisdom is so wise that it often appears as foolishness to the world! And God has put this wisdom on public display in three showcases:

CREATION

Proverbs 3:19 The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.

The simplest things in creation, from worms to fingernails, involve a magnitude of genius that humans can admire but never fully imitate.

The human body is composed of nearly 100 trillion cells, all working together. Think of your skin – while water penetrates the skin outwardly, it cannot penetrate it inwardly. Think of your bones – capable of carrying a load thirty times greater than brick will support. Think of your liver – it breaks up old blood cells into bile and neutralizes poisonous substances. Think of your blood – ten to twelve pints of a syrupy substance that distributes oxygen and carries away waste from tissues and organs, and also regulates the body’s temperature. Think of the heart – weighing less than a pound, it’s a real workhorse. On the average, it pumps 100,000 times every day, circulating 2000 gallons of blood through 60,000 miles of arteries, capillaries and veins.

Have you ever tried to create? One mistake and everything else usually goes wrong. And our simple creations are nothing compared to God’s!

THE CHURCH

Ephesians 3:10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

The church? Are you kidding?

God INTENDS for us to be a testimony to His wisdom, but it’s up to us whether we fulfill our responsibility or thwart His intent. On Sundays, you make a choice whether you’ll GO to church. But every day of the week, you make a choice whether you’ll BE the church.

Even when something messes up here on earth and a preacher’s sin, a congregation’s fight, or a Christian’s shoddy lifestyle gives the church’s reputation a black eye, the viewpoint is vastly different from the heavens.

God does not stage His wisdom show for OUR friends or enemies; He stages it for HIS – the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms. They get front row seats to witness His wisdom on display through the church.

What do they see? That God takes the most unlikely people, not many of whom are wise by human standards, and by sheer grace and at great cost, makes them His very own holy people.

It is wisdom disguised as foolishness!

THE CROSS

1 Corinthians 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.

Imagine if God assembled the world’s experts to help Him answer the question, “How do you deal with sin and evil?” The philosopher? The moralist? The politician? The entertainer? On and on would go the wisdom of the world. And you and I? We’d still be dying in our sin!

God didn’t consult our wisdom. He came in disguise and apparently let His enemies get the best of Him on Calvary’s cross! It is a powerful story.

Thomas Fudge: “Christianity Without The Cross”

Mel Gibson’s “The Passion of the Christ” opened this past Wednesday, February 25. The irony is that crowds will be moved by the PORTRAYAL of the cross, but still rebel against the PREACHING of the cross!