

Discussion Questions Set #1

“For the message of the cross is foolishness 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; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.” (1 Corinthians 1:18-19)

1. Discuss in what ways the message of the cross might sound like foolishness to our culture. What do followers of Jesus believe that might sound foolish, strange or difficult to believe?
2. What is the difference between having a “reasonable” faith and one upheld by or predicated on intelligence, logic or philosophy?
3. Why do you think the Corinthians were so eager to establish an “intelligent faith” over and above a simple faith based upon the message of Christ crucified? How might a similar desire be manifest in the church today?

Discussion Questions Set #2

“Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 22-24)

“But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him.” (1 Corinthians 1:27-29)

1. Discuss the significance of God’s calling upon one’s ability to grasp the message of Christ crucified. Why is it important to recognize God’s role – even prior to our births – in setting the stage for the message of Christ crucified being received not as foolishness or a stumbling block, but as truth.
2. Why is it significant that God chose to operate through “the foolish things of the world”?
3. How does all of this nullify boasting before God? Why is this significant?

Discussion Questions Set #3

“When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God’s power..” (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

1. When we think of sharing our faith in Jesus with others, do you think there still exists a tendency to rely on wise and persuasive words? Why do you think this might be the case? What “stumbling blocks” might such an understanding create?
2. What do you think Paul means by saying that he “resolved to know nothing while [he] was with [the Corinthians] except Jesus Christ and him crucified”?
3. What does it mean to share a message with “a demonstration of the Spirit’s power”? How might such an aim affect our witness to others?