

Christ

in 1 Corinthians

THE CROSS OF CHRIST



1 Corinthians 1:17–2:8

¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. ¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.” ²⁰ 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?



1 Corinthians 1:17–2:8

²¹ 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. ²² For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.



1 Corinthians 1:17–2:8

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.



1 Corinthians 1:17–2:8

³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." ^{2:1} And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. ² For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³ And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling,



1 Corinthians 1:17–2:8

⁴ and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. ⁶ Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. ⁷ But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.



Knowledge and wisdom in 1 Corinthians

- The contrast between human and divine wisdom
- “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?” (1:20)
- “Do you not know?” (9x in this letter)



1 Corinthians 8:1-3

Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." This "knowledge" puffs up, but love builds up. ² If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. ³ But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.



Outline

1. Knowing God through Christ and him Crucified
2. Knowing Ourselves through Christ and him Crucified
3. Knowing Others through Christ and him Crucified



1. Knowing God through Christ and him Crucified



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→ The cross displays the wisdom and power of God



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→ The cross displays the wisdom and power of God

→ We cannot know God in the unfiltered majesty of his being, but only through Christ and him crucified



2. Knowing Ourselves through Christ and him Crucified



2. Knowing Ourselves through Christ and him Crucified

→ The cross removes all boasting



2. Knowing Ourselves through Christ and him Crucified

→ The cross removes all boasting

→ The cross shows both our sin and pardon





Stand in faith by that cross, see the blessed Saviour suffering, dying there; see the nails upon which He hangs and the blood dripping from those awful wounds; see the thorns crushed upon His sacred brow and the blood enwrapping His naked body as with a crimson shroud. That is what sin has done, the sin that is in your heart and in mine.

—H. A. Ironside



I saw one hanging on a tree in agony and blood
Who fixed His loving eyes on me, as near His cross I stood
And never till my dying breath, will I forget that look
It seemed to charge me with His death
Though not a word He spoke

My conscience felt and owned the guilt
And plunged me in despair
I saw my sins His blood had spilt, and helped to nail Him there
But with a second look He said
"I freely all forgive
This blood is for your ransom paid
I died that you might live"

—John Newton

3. Knowing Others through Christ and him Crucified



2 Corinthians 2:14-16

But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.

¹⁵ For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, ¹⁶ to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life



3. Knowing Others through Christ and him Crucified

→ Those who are perishing (the world): stumble at the cross



3. Knowing Others through Christ and him Crucified

- Those who are perishing (the world): stumble at the cross
- Those who are being saved (the church): bear the cross
& boast in the cross



1 Corinthians 4:9-13

For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men.

¹⁰ We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. ¹¹ To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, ¹² and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; ¹³ when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.



3. Knowing Others through Christ and him Crucified

- Those who are perishing (the world): stumble at the cross
- Those who are being saved (the church): bear the cross
& boast in the cross



Galatians 6:14

But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

