

Is He Enough?

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Bible Text: 1 Corinthians 1:22,23
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Let us go to our text this morning which will be found in 1 Corinthians 1:22-23.

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;

Let us pray.

Dear heavenly Father, how glorious thou art. Lord, known unto thee are all of thy works, known unto thee is all of thy providences, known unto thee, Lord, is all that is in thy sovereignty. Lord, may you at this hour and the hour to come, may you take our minds and hearts and cut those strings from the world, from these sins that so easily beset us, from our thoughts and our dreams and our admirations and, Lord, may that love for thee be resident in our lives in this hour and the hour to come. May thy love strengthen us, may thy love guide us and may thy truth, Lord, be spoken this day for the glory of thee. Lord, I pray that you would be my strength in this hour, that you, Lord, would loose my lips to speak thy truth and that you would strengthen me in thee as it pleases you for your glory. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Our text today, as I said, is 1 Corinthians 1:22-23, "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness." About a week and a half ago I read that passage and the Lord really arrested me in it to take me deeper into where and what was going on in Paul's mind when he wrote this first letter to the church at Corinth. We know the church at Corinth had many problems and Paul, as he began his letter, of course, he addressed it to those who were in Christ, who were sanctified in Christ. He spoke to them about the faithfulness of Christ and the faithfulness of the Lord. He talked to them about the visions that were among them and the only thing he gave them to cure those divisions was a singleness of mind, but it would be the mind of Christ.

Then he goes into this section about why the Lord called him and it's one of my dearest sections in all of the word of God because as I'm brought to this, of course, my thoughts as being a preacher of the word in the year 2016, I understand that there is plenty of foolishness in this world. I understand the power of the wisdom of men. I understand that

there are those who still require a sign, a sign meaning, "Lord, you show me this. Or if you do this, then I will believe." If you think about that for a moment, and what the Lord arrested me in this passage, was that while Paul was saying these words – now think about it – all of this is going around Paul, he's writing this letter and he says, "You know, the Jews, they still seek after a sign. The Greeks, they want the wisdom of this world." And Paul says, "You know, that's what everything around me wants but it's not going to sway me from the standard that the Lord had arrested me on that day, and revealed his Son in me." And when he revealed Christ to him, he made Paul an able minister of Christ, and when Paul said, "But we preach Christ crucified," there was a reason for that, that in all of this that is around him, those that were seeking outward signs, those that were seeking...the Lord said to those in Matthew 12:39, "He answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." They came to Christ all the time, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the scribes, the masses of the people, and they kept wanting miracles and the Lord performed miracles. He turned water to wine, he raised people from the dead, he healed the sick, he cast out devils, but they still couldn't believe and it was no different than the time that Jesus spoke those and he said, "And there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of the prophet Jonas," the resurrection. The Lord would raise from the dead. The resurrection of Christ would be the end-all. And yet nobody saw it that didn't have eyes to see, nobody proclaimed it. In fact, most of the world spent all of their time to dispute that it ever happened.

Paul when he says, "But I preach," we, the ministers of God, "we preach Christ crucified," and what that meant for Paul was that he saw at the cross the finished work of Christ. He saw the bondage of the law being nailed there in his life. He saw that all of his sins were forgiven there at that place. It was a real event and it happened and the Lord came in time to save his people before the foundation of the world, had ordained that he would save. And Paul said, "All of these people around me want to see more signs. There is that sect of people, the Jews, that want to see signs, then over here I've got the Greeks," which represent the world, and all of their wisdom and all of their philosophy. There was no greater people at that time that were filled with the philosophy of the world than the Greeks and they desired more of it, and they drank down what man would say. "What it is man says about this?" And Paul says to them later in the second letter to the Corinthians, he would speak about the simplicity that's in Christ and you and I can sit there and marvel at that today because it is simple that Christ came to save his people from their sins, and he did die, and he did raise again, and his life, his resurrection life is the power of his children today. And we can look at that and we can say, "It seems so simple," but yet we can't reveal that to anyone sitting next to us; we can't persuade the one in front of us; we can't tell the one next to us and save that person because they can't see it because they still either want more signs that they can believe in signs. "Lord, show me more of your power."

I love to read the old writers and they all seem to have this idea and this truth that says it was such a display of the Lord's power to convert a soul; that to turn it from darkness to light is such a great power, even greater power than to make the world. Let that sink in a minute. That shows you how far the fall plunged man; how alienated they were from God. And yet Paul in the midst of this, in the midst of these people, in the midst of one

saying, "We want more signs. We want more signs that he resurrected. We want more signs." Jesus said, "Listen, I gave you the sign. You will see the sign." But did they really see the sign? When the Old Testament prophets, when Jonah spoke and was spit up there and he said, "Lord, salvation is of the Lord." When he brought Jonah to the end of himself to see, "I can run here, I can run there, I can go anywhere but yet the Lord showed me that his great sovereignty brought me down to the depths of the belly of the whale," and the only way to have life was for the Lord to spit him up and to energize him with life and he says, "Lord, salvation is of the Lord." Do you think that Jonah sat there and he's talking about being spit up from a whale? Do you think it was a physical act in his life and he just sits there and he goes, "Well, I'm saved from the whale"? No. And for you and I, that's the question today. There is a group of people who say, "I still want signs. I still have to...Lord, if you do this, if you just show me this."

Listen, you know, we've had a lot of events take place in this nation in the last week or two and you can turn on the tv and you can hear every man's opinion. Every man. I don't care if you're a Democrat. I don't care if you're a Republican. Everybody's got a slant view of what took place in this place, in that place, when nobody knows the truth. But it's funny how the child of God, and I'm speaking of myself, I'll turn on the tv or I'll listen to the radio and I'm sitting there going, "Well, what really happened there? Well, let me listen to this guy. I respect this guy. What really happened there?" And I'm seeking a sign. But the Lord in the sovereign purpose of life has revealed life to only his children. That's what he told the Jews. There is a sign that's given, it's the resurrection life of Christ, but the world doesn't see it and the philosophy of the world will never see it.

That's the thing that's impressed upon me the most when the Lord brought me to this again, to this passage again, and I sit there and I say, "Well, you know, Paul, why weren't you swayed to preach about signs? Why weren't you swayed to talk about the wisdom of the world? Why aren't you preaching that?" Because he's kept. Because he's kept and preserved by the power of God and the Lord kept him to say, "Listen, what I am preaching, I am preaching the anthem of the heavens. I am preaching what is the truth of the Gospel and that is that Christ was crucified, Christ was buried, Christ rose again, Christ ascended into heaven and Christ is the life of his children."

Paul said, "You can require whatever you want, you can require signs, you can require wisdom of man's wisdom, you can require all of that." You can sit there today and say, "I need more of the wisdom of this world or I need more signs," and Paul said, "You know, the only thing that will ever touch your soul is Christ crucified. Not Christ, Christ crucified." And to me, every time I hear those two words together, what the Lord has revealed to me is all of the finished work that's in Christ and what does that mean. And Paul said, "I won't loose sight of this standard. This is what the Lord has called me for." In Philippians 1:21 he says, "For me to live is Christ." When the Lord arrested him, Paul's journey now was to speak of this one who saved him. His desire was to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ.

I was reading in a sermon, I think it was this week, it might have been the end of last week, where the writer was talking about how many times Paul preached Christ or

mentioned Christ in his letters, in his epistles, and it was over 200 times. And the writer said, "You know, it shows you something about Paul and what his message was." His desire was to preach the one who gave him life. It wasn't the wisdom of the world. It wasn't the signs of the times. It wasn't the things that were going on in the headlines, it was what makes the difference in those things? Who makes that difference? What is my life?

And when Paul said that, "for me to live is Christ and to die is gain," I often wonder about that last part of that, to die is gain? I mean, Paul, how can you? Well, that's resurrection life. That's seeing Christ as a triumphant Lord over all of your enemies. That's the no fear of death. That's the no fear of the grave. That is the no fear of anything in the future. Why? Because the Lord has engulfed his life and the Lord is my life. I'm safe and secure in that ark. I'm accepted in the Beloved.

And as the Lord reveals himself to his children, he reveals the depth of what that life is, and that's what was so amazing to me. As I sat there, I was thinking, you know, a minister of the Lord is called to preach the truth and every time that you get up here, there is always noise. There is noise everywhere. There is noise in the land. There is noise in the religious world. There is noise around you, people says, you know, because everyday in life, the Lord's providence brings things into your life. For whatever reason, the Lord brings them in to grow his children up.

And I thought about that this week as I've had a few of those times in my life and the Lord would bring them into my life and I was saying, "Well, there's a lot around the people of God that wants to take the child of God away from Christ." And that's what I see in Paul here. "Listen, I know all this is raining around me. I know that you people here in Corinth are subjected to these evils. You are the ones that this is so prevalent around you. Now, what is that remedy? What is it?" And Paul didn't tell them, "Here's what you've got to do." Paul didn't say, "Here's what you must do." Paul didn't say more obedience. Paul didn't say, "Go study the prophets." What Paul said was, "The only answer is Christ, Christ crucified." What does that mean?

And it seems like the people around Paul and the time that he preached this, and around this church, the religious world was ever seeking a sign and they were ever seeking some kind of knowledge. Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3 and he said there were those ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

And as I look at life, as the Lord stops me in my tracks, that verse right there, it's true. That's what we do in this life. We are ever absorbing, we are ever learning. And we can sit and we can always learn and study and study, but without him we can do nothing. Without the Holy Spirit saying to us, "That's truth," we're going to be ever learning and yet never understanding truth. So we are dependent, dependent upon the Lord.

You know, the second part of this, "but we preach Christ crucified," he says this, "unto the Jews a stumblingblock." Now, think about that. We require a sign. Jesus said, "There won't be any sign given to you but the resurrection of me." That's where life is, but yet

they couldn't see it. He's a stumblingblock to them. The Jews who knew who Christ was and what family he belonged to and what street he belonged to and where he grew up, that was a big stumblingblock to them. It was. It was a big stumblingblock. They looked and they said, "Well, we know whose parents this is. I mean, we know whose child this is, who his parents are. We know where he grew up. He can't be the Son of God."

And then you've got, "to the Greeks it's foolishness." In the world's wisdom, it's foolishness that one would leave heaven and would come down here just for the purpose of saving his people from their sins. It's foolishness. "You are the Son of God, you are God reigning, I wouldn't do it that way. If I was a super-abounding God as you are, I would just throw down bolts from heaven or I would say this, I would do it this way." Because we all get our ideas from our superheroes and how we think these nations rule other nations and we say, "This is how I would rule. This is what I've seen in history. This is what has worked. This is what hasn't worked." And that's what the Greeks did and that's what man does today. Man's wisdom says, "This just doesn't make any sense."

I've heard that, I won't say all my life, but I will say most of my preaching life. I have heard that. "It just doesn't make any sense. What do you mean there remains a rest? There is no rest. We're the militant church here. We're to work. We're to further the kingdom. We're to do all of this for God." No, there remaineth a rest for the people of God. What do they rest in? They rest in the finished work of Christ. "Well, no, finished work, what good is that? You've got to do this. You've got to do that. You've got to do this." You've heard the same things. "It doesn't make any sense. It makes you lazy. It makes you a robot. It makes you..." No, it doesn't. What it makes you is a disciple of Christ who is made to sit at his feet. That's what it makes you, but it isn't it, it's what he makes you. He maketh me to lie down in the green pastures of his finished work.

It is the faith of the Son of God that Paul wrote about in Galatians 2. It is the faith of the Son of God that testifies of his finished work in your soul. If you are ever to be at rest and brought to the rest in Christ, it will be because of the faith of the Son of God that is imputed and imparted to you to believe and to rest. It won't be because of anything you've done. And when I read the 23rd Psalm, I see that in David, that that was one who was taught of the Lord. "He maketh me. He restoreth me." It's all about the Lord. It's all about what the Lord has done for him.

On this part about the stumblingblock, Paul wrote in Romans 9:33, "As it is written, Behold, I lay in Zion a stumblingstone and a rock of offense and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." And Paul was quoting from Isaiah, that was taken from Isaiah 28. Isaiah prophesied that the Lord Jesus Christ would be a stumblingstone. And think about those words, "a rock of offense." Jesus asked, he turned around to his disciples and he said, "Does this offend you?" That's what the Lord's reference was, "Does it offend you that you are following me and all power, without me you can do nothing, does that offend you? Does it offend you that Christ is life? Does it offend you that you can have no life outside of Christ? Does it offend you that your hands and your plans and your machinations of your mind cannot save you? Does that offend you?" And for many the answer was, "Yes, it does," and they followed him no more.

Turn with me while we can, let's turn over to 1 Peter 2. Now, we heard what Paul said, who spoke too of Christ being prophesied that he would be a stumblingblock but that's the way it is. You know, that's a hard thing for us to accept, isn't it? That Christ said it would be this way. Our nature then says, "Well, let me see if I can undo that. Let me see if I can persuade this one. Let me see if I can be this to this person. Let me see if I can combat that worldly wisdom." But the Lord said, "It was prophesied and fulfilled that he's a stumblingblock."

In 1 Peter 2, I believe it's in verse 7, he says, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious," and I hope that's the case today, that that is an adjective that you would describe your Lord. "He's precious to me." Precious means it's something essential to you. He is something that's so desirable of me that he is desirable above other things. He's precious to me.

"But unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." Did you get that? They were appointed. Do you not see the hand of a sovereign Lord in that? Yeah, I think when "tragedies" take place in this nation, there's always that period right afterwards, why? Why did this happen? Who could have prevented this? What group is at fault here? Why did this take place? And all that wisdom of man keeps seeking after a sign or seeking after some kind of answer for these things and there is the Lord reigning on high, that his people are revealed, "The Lord is reigning. The Lord has brought us into this. The Lord has done this."

Verse 9, "But ye are a chosen generation." Do you know what that "chosen" word means? That means grace. By grace ye are saved.

"But ye," the people of God. Peter said, "But you, the church, the body of Christ, you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." Not light, he called you into his marvelous light. There's a difference because there is a light in this world. We hear that everyday, "We need to unify. The people need, love will conquer this." The world says, "We've got an answer for all these things." But the child of God is brought to his Lord to say, "Lord, where is the answer here? I know, I hear the wisdom of the world, I hear those scoffing, I hear all those but, Lord, where is...?" And he brings us to see that he is the light because we are peculiar people. That means odd. That means particular.

"He called us out of a darkness into his marvelous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God." I ask you that every time I read something like that, do you have that where the Lord has brought you from a darkness to light in him? Or do you sit there and you say, "Well, you know, I don't know. I kind of feel like I've been the same my whole life. I haven't seen any difference in my life. I've always

believed the Lord. I was raised to read the Bible and I was raised to believe this way and I went to this church and, you know, I kind of see things today the same way I did then."

Well, the Bible is explicit and it says, "in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." What mercy is that? That the Lord translated you out of a life of darkness to a life of light in Christ.

Now, let's go back to our text in 1 Corinthians 1. "For the Jews require a sign," this is 22 and 23, "and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness." And as I said, it's the faith of the Son of God that must testify to you in your soul that the Lord has finished all things for you. He has performed all things and he did it on the cross, and when he rose from that grave and he ascended into heaven, he is reigning and his kingdom is set up in your soul. You're not looking for a physical kingdom because that kingdom is spiritual and what Christ has between you and him is in your soul, and you're not looking for physical signs and you're not looking for physical wisdom because Christ is wisdom. But that's what I mean, even in Paul's time, he's surrounded by this kind of thought and logic: signs, wisdom of the world. And Paul is brought to say, "But we," the people who truly are called of God to speak the Gospel, "we preach Christ crucified."

He satisfied, and that's the other thing, the two things that stick out to me to hear those words, "Christ crucified," in the finished work, is that the Lord stood in my place. He was the perfect substitute for me, and I can't delve into how deep that goes; that the Lord said, "I'm going to take this one and I'm going to stand in his place and I'm going to absorb the anger of my Father for his justice to be met because a holy and just God must have justice." We love to speak of mercy, rightfully so, but this Lord must have perfect justice and that's what we see at the cross. That's what the Lord did, he satisfied the perfect, the holy justice of his Father and that must be personal to you. It must be personal to you that the Lord stood in your place and by doing so, he reconciled, the other word, he reconciled you to the Father because there was no way that you would ever reconcile yourself and that's the Gospel that Paul preached and it was personal to him.

Acts 9:15 says this and the Lord was speaking to Ananias and this was right after Paul was converted. He said, "But the Lord said unto him," that being Ananias, "Go thy way for he is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles." That's what Paul is saying, "I preach Christ crucified. I'm not preaching Paul and what Paul says, I'm preaching the Lord Jesus Christ." The Lord said unto him, "Go thy way for he is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel." That was his personal calling. The Lord said, "I've chosen you, Paul. You will bear my name. You will preach my name." Peter said it this way in Acts 4:12, he said, "Neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Saved. Christ crucified. Peter spoke the same Gospel. John spoke the same Gospel. James spoke the same Gospel. Paul spoke the same Gospel. Every minister of God speaks the same Gospel and it begins in Christ and it flows through Christ and it will end in Christ.

1 John 4:10 says, "Herein is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation." The propitiation, the one who stood in our place, the substitute. He sent him. This is what love is, that the Father sent his Son. This is Christ crucified. Is that what it is to you today? It has to be personal. Do you see that when Christ went to the cross, he went there for you? That's what personal is. Not that Jesus died on the cross, but that he died on the cross for you. And that's what John wrote here. Do you see the love in this perfect plan of salvation? Do you see the love of the Father to send his Son? Do you see the love of the Holy Ghost to reveal that in your soul? Do you see the power and the love of the Triune Lord?

He sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. He absorbed all of that wrath that God must punish sin, and all of that wrath that the Father had against sin, against all of his children's sin from all time, past, present and future, was poured out in a mighty powerful fashion on the only one who could stand in my place and take that wrath. There are people in here that I believe love me. There are people in here I believe that love me and say, "You know, I would throw myself in front of a truck for you." There might be. I hope there is. If there is, even that person could not do what Christ did for me because he didn't save me, he saved me from all death. He saved me. Because of him standing in my place, because of that justice that the Father said, "It must be satisfied." This is not a wishy-washy God that you hear about today, "Oh, he winks at that. Oh, he doesn't care about that." And I was brought up that way. I would go to my parents and I would say, "I've sinned in this way." "Oh, the Lord doesn't care about that." He does care about that so much so that his anger and wrath to punish that sin was done to his Son. That is love, love for the child of God ever in Christ, and that satisfied the justice of the perfect and holy God.

Yes, I accept that. Yes, I accept that sacrifice, that perfect sacrifice, one without blemish, one with no sin, one who said, "I will lay down my life for my friends." But, oh, we're more than friends, we're his body, we're his bride. We if we be in Christ, we are the church. We are the remnant.

Why do we emphasize this today? Is there anything else in life as important? I ask all the time, "Is he enough?" Has he testified to you that he stood in your place? Has he testified to you that he reconciled you to the Father? You who were alienated, by his blood? Paul said in Romans 5:10, "For if when we were enemies." Some of these religious people, "Oh, I was never an enemy. I've loved the Lord all my life. I'm devoted." No, when we were enemies, "we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." That's what Paul said, "to me to live is Christ." Because of him, because of what he has done. That's what Christ crucified is to me. That his blood flowed to cover the multitude of my sins. Every one of them.

And as the Lord reveals the depth of that to me, it brings a sorrow because I continue to sin. It brings a sorrow to me because it's weird, it's hard to explain because it also brings a great joy because he shows me that I could have never done it, and no bull or no goat or no cow or nothing else would ever be able to wash me clean. That was one of the things

that always bothered me as a child, you know, being a good science person, when David wrote that the blood of Christ would cleanse him and make him white as snow. How could something red run over you and make you white? One of those scientific things I always struggle with in the literalness of the word. You know, I would say, "Man, how could something red make me white?" I understand it now. I understand the efficacious power of the blood to wash away that filth and wash away that sin. And that's my strong tower. That's my Lord who has finished everything for me, and when he applies that salvation as he does and his is faithful to all of his children to do, that is what life is to me.

The last place we'll go, turn over to Colossians 1 with me. Look at Colossians 1 beginning in verse 19. "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." It pleased the Father, that in Christ, this one who stood in our place, this one who rose triumphantly, in him all fullness for all of his children dwells everything.

"And, having made peace," that's reconciliation, "through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." And I love when Paul writes things like that because it puts me in my rightful place. There was nothing good in you. You didn't raise up and go, "Lord, pick me because I'm holy. I did this for you. I did that for you." "Depart from me." What you are is a sinner in need of grace.

"In the body of his flesh through death, to present you," you, that's that personal salvation that the Lord has for his children, "to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight." Those words just don't seem possible for us, does it? No, and they won't looking through carnal eyes, but in Christ, by Christ, and through Christ, that's what you are.

The enemy is so powerful. He will tell us everyday that God is angry with us because of sin, but no, as you've heard today, God's anger fell on Christ and it was absorbed by him. The enemy will always tell us the law is against us and would condemn us, will put us back under it. "You've got to do this. You've got to do that." What the Lord reveals, as Paul said in Romans 10:4, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." It's the end of it. There are no have-to's and must-do's in the liberty of Christ Jesus. These enemies will tell you that your sins are way too many and that the Lord couldn't save something so wicked, but in 1 John 1:7 we read, "But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin." Every one of them. How dire a day it is that we need to hear from him that his blood has covered all our sins. That's what Paul said. That's the answer I have. You want signs? You want wonders? You want the philosophy of men? You want the wisdom of men? Here's the only standard I can raise, Christ crucified. It's finished in him.

Ending today, I'd like to read from 20 on in our text. Go back to our text, beginning in 1 Corinthians 1:20. Our Lord has opened this gate, as narrow as it is, he has opened it for

us, the gate that one time, I hope you've seen in your life and felt that it was closed against you. That's what sin does, it locks us and that's what the law does, and that's what bondage to the world does, it locks us in this prison that we need to be set free from the one who led captivity captive. He is the only way. I think, I go back to the garden many times and I think about that tree of life. I think about how that tree of life was left with a flaming sword guarding it. That flaming sword is not allowing any man to the tree of life. There must be a way and that way is in Christ alone to himself and he is the only way to the Father.

Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?" And we know where we live today, this world is full of them, but here's the question for you, "hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" Has he? Has he made the wisdom of this world foolishness to you? Has he?

"For after that in the wisdom of God," by his design, "the world by wisdom knew not God." Their wisdom cannot attain who God is, what God is doing, why God has done it. Wisdom of man. So all of these reports we hear, what does that tell us? They can't ascend to the mind of God. And then you think, "Well, who can?" We have the mind of Christ, the child of God. That's what the Holy Spirit leads us into truth.

"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." That's what Paul said, you know, we've got all this stuff around us and the Lord ordained that we preach the Gospel. The Gospel isn't going any other way but by the way that we're preaching it. And it was so true. That's the Lord's ordained means of spreading the Gospel to where his people were. Paul was made an able minister. I pray today that the truth that is spoken goes to his sheep wherever they're found. As many ways the Lord has ordained and means, but it's the same Spirit that must do it.

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called," do you see that qualifying term? Those who are called away from that. Those who are called and sanctified in Christ Jesus, what he said back at the beginning of this letter. Those who are in Christ in that union, in that vital union with Christ.

"Unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." That's the difference. Notice how that triumphed over the wisdom of man and the signs of man. But unto them who are called, this is what they look for. This is what their desire is, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

"Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men." I stumble sometimes to read that. I mean, I know what Paul meant, this is the way the world's wisdom looks at God, but just to say those words, the foolishness of God. There is no foolishness in God. There is no weakness in God, but man views him that way. And Paul spoke to them, "Whatever you

believe is weakness and whatever you believe is foolishness, to the child of God, it's strength, and to the child of God, it's wisdom." Why? We'll cover that here in a minute.

"Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." Paul looked around him when he was preaching and he looked at the church and he said, "Hm." As he's writing this letter he said, "You know, there are not a lot of noble men in here. There are not a lot of wise men in here. There are not a lot of the ones who are caught after the wisdom of the world." He didn't say there weren't any, he said there were not many. And what does that tell us about the wisdom of man? And what does that tell us about the pride of life? And what does that tell us about it's death? It's certain death.

"Not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 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," which we've talked about today, which man says, "My wisdom, my understanding, my knowledge, my intellect, my ingenuity," and the Lord says, "Here's the simplicity that's in Christ, everything is finished in my Son." Well, that's not what the world wants to hear and it's not what the world will hear.

"And base things of the world." Don't tell me the people of God aren't looked at this way. They are. Base things. How can you...that's just foolishness.

"The 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." Why? Why, Lord?

"That no flesh should glory in his presence." Then we have that eternal vital union,

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus." I love how Paul always, always points to that union. What we have in Christ is where the child of God is triumphant and that's it. It's only what's in Christ before the foundation of the world.

"Of him are ye in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." All of those things, he must be made unto us, for in him they dwell.

"That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." I don't think there's anything else I can say after that, but to commend you to that.

Dear heavenly Father, may thy people this day glory in you and you alone for your glory. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.