

## **1 Corinthians 1:18-25<sup>iv</sup>**

The message about 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, 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, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.

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### **<sup>iv</sup> About the Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25**

Paul sets forth the general principle that the wisdom of God appears to be folly to those wise in worldly terms, while to those in the process of salvation, it reveals the power of God. Human-centered wisdom, which is itself closely related to our efforts, will be overturned by God.

Knowledge of God is possible through natural revelation, but the certainty sought for by submitting God to the world’s criteria of proof, either pragmatically in “signs” (v. 22) of power or intellectually in “wisdom” (V. 22) is not possible. God’s act of “foolishness” and “weakness” (V. 25) confounds both what the Jews expected of the Messiah and what Greeks believed about the immortal and impassible nature of divinity.

This principle of reversal is illustrated by the Corinthian church itself. Most of its members were not from the intellectual, political or social elite. (Indeed, the gospel appealed to slaves, women and children!) God chooses what the world counts worthless to overturn the world’s expectations.