

Introduction (1 Cor 1:4-31)

On June 17, 2022, Gallup Polls reported that the United States hit a new low for the percent of people that believe that there is a god.¹ It reported that 81% now believe in God. The lowest segment of the population is the youth. This poll is not a Christianity survey of how many believe in Christ, but just that there is a God. We are living in an increasingly secular world. The contrasting views are becoming more obvious. The Christian and the world's view on abortion is very different. The Christian and the world's view about sex, gender, prayer, money, and nearly every topic is radically different. Not only are the views different, but there is a growing intolerance and even animosity of the world towards those with a Christian viewpoint.

In America, there are primarily two parties, the Republican and the Democrats. There are more than ten lesser-known political parties, such as the socialist party, communist party, and libertarian party. However, most people identify with either the Republicans or the Democrats. The values and views of these two parties are growing further apart, and the intolerance and animosity between these two parties is increasing. When observing the political elections, or the way the government is functioning, the contrast between the political parties is very evident.

Similarly, the church in Corinth was very divided philosophically. The Corinthians prided themselves on their wisdom, and loved to debate. Philosophy comes from two Greek words, *fileo* and *Sophia*, which means a love for wisdom, and the Greeks had a love of humanistic, worldly, wisdom. Some scholars say that there may have been over fifty different philosophical parties, and so it was even more divided than America. When people received Christ, they brought their philosophical views and prejudices with them, and so the church faced political divides over the wisdom of the various philosophers. In addition to philosophical division, there were divisions in ethnic groups: Roman citizens and non-citizens, Jews and Gentiles, free and slave, rich and poor, male and female. Division was such an issue in the church that Paul has prioritized it in his letter of correction to the Corinthians. The first four chapters are devoted to correcting the divisions in the church. In Paul's Exhortation for Unity (1 Cor 1:10-17), he dealt with the divisions over the various leaders. Some were of Paul, some were of Apollos, some were of Peter, and some were not claiming any local leader, and were just under Christ. Paul exhorted and appealed to them to be of one mind and not to have any divisions. He asked them some rhetorical questions to help adjust their mindset. He asked if he had been crucified for them, or if they had been baptized in the name of Paul. He also asked them if Christ had been divided. He ended by saying that he had been sent to preach the gospel, not to baptize people. He did not preach the gospel in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void. That was a transitional statement into his next section, which is on the word of the cross.

In 1 Corinthians 1:18 through 1 Corinthians 2:5. Paul gives three contrasting views about the word of the cross. The first contrast was about the value of the cross. To the world, it was foolishness, which would hold true in our generation. But, to those that were being saved, the word of the cross was the wisdom and power of God. The second contrast was the duration of the word of the cross. The word of the cross endures forever, but the wisdom of the world is temporal and will be destroyed. The third contrast is the results of the word of the cross. To those that are perishing, it was foolishness, but to those being saved, it was salvation, sanctification, righteousness, and redemption. Why did God make the word of the cross so contrasting? He did this so that the wisdom of the world would be shamed, that the faith of believers would rest on the power of God, and that those who boast, must boast in Lord.

¹ <https://news.gallup.com/poll/393737/belief-god-dips-new-low.aspx>

Three Contrasts of the Word of the Cross

1. Contrasting Values
 - a. The word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing.
 - b. The word of the cross is the wisdom and power of God to those who are being saved.
2. Contrasting Duration
 - a. The word of the cross endures forever
 - b. The wisdom of the world is temporal (will be destroyed)
3. Contrasting Results
 - a. The word of the cross shames the wise.
 - b. The word of the cross offers salvation (righteousness, sanctification, and redemption) to those that believe.

(1 Cor 1:18-25) “For the word of the cross is foolishness 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 CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE.” {20} Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? {21} For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. {22} For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; {23} but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, {24} but to those who are the 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.”

(1 Cor 1:26-31) “For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; {27} but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, {28} and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, {29} so that no man may boast before God. {30} But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, {31} so that, just as it is written, “LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD.”

(1 Cor 2:1–5) “And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. {2} For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. {3} I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, {4} and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, {5} so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.”

1. **Contrasting Values** (1 Cor 1:18-25)

The first contrast is the value of the word of the cross. To those that are perishing, those that have not believed and received Christ, the word of the cross is foolishness. In contrast, to those who are being saved, have put their trust and faith in Christ, the word of the cross is the power of God. In this passage, fool or foolish is mentioned six times and wise or wisdom is mentioned fifteen times. The wisdom of God is mentioned three times and the wisdom of men or the world is mentioned three times. There is a contrast in the values of the world and of God, particularly concerning the word of the cross. The word for foolish is *moria* (Strong’s G3472), which is where we get our English word, *moron*, from. It means silliness, absurdity, or foolishness.

(1 Cor 1:18) “For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”

In verse seventeen, Paul wrote, “For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void.” The ESV says, “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.” The Greek word is *kenoo* (Strong’s G2758), which means to make empty, make void, be in vain. I believe the NASB and KJV are more accurate in this case, but the ESV is correct from a contextual view. The word of the cross is powerful, and if our faith is built on the wisdom of men, then the cross of Christ is made void or is emptied of its power. The ESV picks up on the contrast being made by Paul of the value in the word of the cross.

(1 Cor 1:17) “For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ **would not be made void.**”

(1 Cor 1:17 ESV) “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.**”

Paul asks some questions. “Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Corinth was full of people who considered themselves to be wise, and who loved to debate. But God did not choose the wisdom of the world to bring them into a relationship with Him. They did not come to know God through worldly wisdom. The wisdom of the world did not deal with man’s sin problem, and the need for forgiveness. The wisdom of the world did not reconcile people to God, and bring them into the presence of a holy God. The wisdom of the world did not change lives; it was merely an intellectual pursuit. How did God bring people into a relationship with Him? God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. The message preached was the word of the cross. The word of the cross is that Jesus was crucified and died for the sins of the world. He was buried, and was raised from the dead on the third day.

(1 Cor 1:19-21) “For it is written, “I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE.” {20} Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? {21} For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.”

Paul includes the wrong pursuits of both the Jews and Greeks. The Jews were asking for signs. They wanted God to prove Himself with signs and wonders. We see an example of this in Matthew 16:1. “The Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Jesus, they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven.” Jesus told them that they could recognize the appearance of the sky, but could not discern the signs of the times. Then, He told them that “an evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, and a sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah.” And Jesus gave them the sign of Jonah; He was buried in the grave for three days and was raised from the dead. Jesus gave lots of signs during His earthly ministry. In John 20:30-31, John recorded that “many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”

(1 Cor 1:22) “For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom;”

(Matt 16:1-4) “The Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Jesus, they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven.... {4} An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah.” And He left them and went away.”

(John 20:30–31) “Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; {31} but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.”

In Jesus story about the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man wanted to send Lazarus back from the dead to warn his five brothers of that place of torment. Jesus said that they have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. The rich man pleaded, saying, “No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!” Abraham replied, “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.” Jesus did the ultimate sign for the Jews, rising from the dead, yet they still rejected the sign that they were looking for.

(Luke 16:29–31) “But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ {30} But he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!’ {31} But he said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’”

The Greeks were looking for wisdom. They gathered to discuss and debate their differing philosophies. They were seeking God through intellectual pursuit. Unfortunately, their pursuit of wisdom and knowledge through philosophy did not bring them into a relationship with God. Their intellectual pursuit did not reconcile them to God and forgive them of their sins. Their pursuit of wisdom puffed them up, rather than humbling their hearts and leading them to repent before a holy God. Their search for wisdom left them empty and void.

(1 Cor 1:22) “For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom;”

The book of Ecclesiastes deals with the pursuit of wisdom. Solomon set his mind to seek and explore wisdom. He concluded that it was vanity and striving after wind. Even though he increased in wisdom and observed a wealth of wisdom and knowledge, he recognized that it was striving after wind.

(Eccl 1:13–17) “And I set my mind to seek and explore by wisdom concerning all that has been done under heaven. It is a grievous task which God has given to the sons of men to be afflicted with. {14} I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and striving after wind.... {16} I said to myself, “Behold, I have magnified and increased wisdom more than all who were over Jerusalem before me; and my mind has observed a wealth of wisdom and knowledge.” {17} And I set my mind to know wisdom and to know madness and folly; I realized that this also is striving after wind.”

Paul preached a very simple message: Christ crucified. Jesus died for our sins on the cross, was buried, and rose from the dead. It was foolishness to them, but it was the power of God and the wisdom of God to those who were being saved. The word of the cross dealt with our need for forgiveness and brought us into a relationship with God.

(1 Cor 1:23-25) “but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, {24} but to those who are the 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.”

The word of the cross also gave us the wisdom of God. In 1 Corinthians 2, Paul discusses this. When someone believes in the word of the cross and receives Christ, God puts His Spirit in them. He opens their eyes to understand His word, and to know the mind of Christ. God gives us His wisdom, which is hidden from those that are perishing. The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

(1 Cor 2:12–14) “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, {13} which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. {14} But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.”

2. **Contrasting Duration** (1 Cor 1:19)

The second contrast is actually part of Paul’s discussion about the value of the cross. Paul quotes from Isaiah 29:14, and wrote, “For it is written, ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside.’” The wisdom of the world is temporal; it is going to be destroyed. However, the word of the cross will never be destroyed or put aside by God. One day every knee will bow before God and give account. Those that pursued God through human wisdom and intellectual pursuit will see their vain pursuits destroyed.

(1 Cor 1:19) “For it is written, “I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE.”

(Is 29:14) “Therefore behold, I will once again deal marvelously with this people, wondrously marvelous; and the wisdom of their wise men will perish, and the discernment of their discerning men will be concealed.”

Many people set their sights on the things of the world, not just the wisdom of the world. The things of the world, and the wisdom of the world are temporal. God tells us to focus on the things that are eternal. This is particularly true in the area of wealth and finances. Paul instructed those who were rich in the present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God. He taught us to do good, be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, and to store up treasures for the future. The philosophers in Corinth were rich in wisdom, or wise in their own eyes, and conceited on something that was going to be destroyed by God. We need to fix our eyes on the Lord, and on things that are eternal. The word of the cross is eternal, and has the power to save people for eternity.

(1 Tim 6:17–19) “Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. {18} Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, {19} storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.”

3. **Contrasting Results** (1 Cor 1:26-31)

There is a contrast in the value of the message of the cross. It is foolish to those that are perishing and it is the power and wisdom of God to those that are being saved. There is a contrast in the duration. The word of the cross is eternal and the wisdom of men will be destroyed because it is temporal. Third, the word of the cross has contrasting results. The word of the cross brings shame to the wise, but offers salvation to those that believe.

(1 Cor 1:26-30) “For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; {27} but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, {28} and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, {29} so that no man may boast before God. {30} But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,”

Paul asked the Corinthians to consider their own calling. He said that “there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble.” The church of Corinth was not primarily made up of the elite philosophers, and noble people; there were some, but not many. Most of the people in the church were not wise according to the worldly standards. People do not get into heaven based upon their earthly wisdom, might, or noble birth. God chose the foolish things of the world, the word of the cross, to shame the wise. God chose the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong. God chose the base things of the world and the despised to nullify the things that are.

(1 Cor 1:26-28) “For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; {27} but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, {28} and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are,”

Why did God choose the foolish things? He did it for two reasons. First, He did it to shame the wise? Second, He did it so that no man could boast before Him. If we are going to boast, we have to boast in the Lord. We could not save ourselves by our own strength, knowledge, or wisdom. It is only by the grace of God that everyone of us is saved. None of us can boast before God; if we boast, we must boast in the Lord.

(1 Cor 1:29-31) “so that no man may boast before God. {30} But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, {31} so that, just as it is written, “LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD.”

The result for those that pursued wisdom was shame. The contrasting result for those who believed the word of the cross was salvation. They received righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. At the cross, Jesus paid the price for our sins. In 2 Corinthians 5:21, Paul wrote that “He who knew no sin became sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

(2 Cor 5:21) “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Having been freed from sin, we became slaves of righteousness. We are to no longer present our members to sin, but we are to be instruments of righteousness, and this results in sanctification, which means to make holy. Paul wrote in Romans 6, “but now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.”

(Rom 6:18–22) “and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. {19} I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, **resulting in sanctification**. {20} For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. {21} Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death. {22} But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, **resulting in sanctification**, and the outcome, eternal life.”

Those that believe in the word of the cross also receive redemption. Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:7, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace,” We have redemption through the blood of Christ.

(Eph 1:7) "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace,”

What is redemption? In the Old Testament, when someone was enslaved, a redemption price had to be paid to set the person free. This redemption price could be paid by his family, relatives, or by himself. The purchase price was partially determined by the number of years left until jubilee. In the year of Jubilee, all the slaves were set free. Therefore, the closer to the year of Jubilee, the lower the cost of redemption. We find more details about this in Leviticus 25:47-54.

(Lev 25:47-55) "Now if the means of a stranger or of a sojourner with you becomes sufficient, and a countryman of yours becomes so poor with regard to him as to sell himself to a stranger who is sojourning with you, or to the descendants of a stranger's family, {48} then he shall have redemption right after he has been sold. One of his brothers may redeem him, {49} or his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or one of his blood relatives from his family may redeem him; or if he prospers, he may redeem himself. {50} 'He then with his purchaser shall calculate from the year when he sold himself to him up to the year of jubilee; and the price of his sale shall correspond to the number of years. It is like the days of a hired man that he shall be with him. {51} 'If there are still many years, he shall refund part of his purchase price in proportion to them for his own redemption; {52} and if few years remain until the year of jubilee, he shall so calculate with him. In proportion to his years he is to refund the amount for his redemption. {53} 'Like a man hired year by year he shall be with him; he shall not rule over him with severity in your sight. {54} 'Even if he is not redeemed by these means, he shall still go out in the year of jubilee, he and his sons with him. {55} 'For the sons of Israel are My servants; they are My servants whom I brought out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God."

The application for us is that we were all slaves to sin. Paul says in Romans that thanks be to God that though we were slaves of sin, we became obedient from the heart and became slaves of righteousness. How did we get free from being slaves to sin? Jesus paid a redemption price for us. He redeemed us from our slavery to sin. In 1 Peter 1:18, we are taught that He did not redeem us with silver or gold, but with His own precious blood.

(1 Pet 1:18) “knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, {19} but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.”

By considering the word of the cross as foolishness and rejecting God’s plan, they are shamed and perish. The result is very different for those who believe and accept God’s plan; they receive salvation, which includes righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

Conclusion and Applications

Paul ends this section with his own example. When he came to Corinth, he did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming the testimony of God. Paul determined to know nothing among them except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. Paul was with them in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. His message and preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power. Paul did not try to win the Corinthians to Christ with humanistic wisdom and philosophical debates. Paul preached the word of the cross, which was foolishness to the wise, but the wisdom and power of God to those that received the message.

(1 Cor 2:1–4) “And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. {2} For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. {3} I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, {4} and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,”

God chose the word of the cross to shame the wise, and to eliminate any chance of people boasting in their wisdom. We all owe our salvation to Christ and our boasting must be in Him alone. We find one more reason why God chose the word of the cross. God chose the word of the cross so that our faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God. The word of the cross might seem foolish, but it is powerful. It took away our sins and gave us righteousness. It freed us from the slavery of sin and redeemed us. The word of the cross has the power to change lives and to sanctify us.

(1 Cor 2:5) “so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.”

Billy Graham was just like Paul. He preached the gospel all over the world, and millions of peoples’ lives were changed by the simple gospel that he preached. He preached the word of the cross. He did not try and persuade people with persuasive words of wisdom; he just preached a powerful gospel message that changed the lives of those that believed the message.

There are many contrasts in the wisdom of the world and the word of the cross. To those that are perishing, the cross is foolishness. They don’t realize that the wisdom of men is going to be destroyed, and the word of the cross is eternal. There are contrasting results in the wisdom of men and the word of the cross. Worldly wisdom results in shame and death, while the word of the cross brings salvation, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. That is the message Paul preached, and the message that all of us should be sharing with others.

What about you this morning? Have you accepted God’s plan of salvation offered through the word of the cross? Do you believe that Jesus came and died for our sins and was raised from the

dead? Have you confessed Him as Lord or Master of your life? He promises to give You His wisdom, to give you His righteousness, and the power to change your life. If you have never accepted God's word of the cross, let me invite you to accept it this morning.

Jesus, thank You for the word of the cross. Thank You for dying on the cross for the sins of the world, and for my sins. I believe that You were raised from the dead and that You are Lord. I ask You to forgive me of my sins and to come into my life as my Lord and Savior. I ask You to sanctify my life so that it honors You. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Prayer

Father, may we have grateful and humble hearts that continually offers up thanksgiving and praise. Let our boasts always be about You and what You have done. Thank You for taking away our sins and giving us Your righteousness. Thank You for redeeming us from the slavery of sin, and paying the ultimate price for our freedom. Thank You for sanctifying us and changing our lives. May our lives reflect Your wisdom and power, so that we properly represent You. Help us to preach the word of the cross to people. Help us not to be concerned about eloquent and polished presentation. Help us to be focused on the message of the cross so that people will not trust in the wisdom of men, but on Your wisdom and Your power. Lord, You want a unified body. May we be a church that is united in Spirit and in the message of the cross. May we refuse to be divided by different leaders, different visions, different ethnicity, or different philosophies. May we be unified in the message of the cross. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Q & A

- How does God shame the wisdom of the world?
- How many of you were wise in the flesh, mighty, or noble before coming to Christ?
- How has your life been powerfully changed by the word of the cross?
- God tells us in 1 Peter 3:15 to be always be ready to make a defense to everyone who asks us to give an account for that the hope that is in us. How does making a defense of the gospel differ from debating with the wisdom of the world?
- If our salvation, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption are all because of Christ, what kind of attitude should that produce in us towards God?

Introduction (1 Cor 1:10-17, 1 Cor 1:18-2:5)

1. **Contrasting Values** (1 Cor 1:18-25, Matt 16:1-4, John 20:30–31, Luke 16:29–31, Eccl 1:13-17, 1 Cor 2:12–14)
2. **Contrasting Duration** (1 Cor 1:19, Is 29:14, 1 Tim 6:17–19)
3. **Contrasting Results** (1 Cor 1:26-31, 2 Cor 5:21, Rom 6:18-22, Eph 1:7, Lev 25:47-55, 1 Pet 1:18)

Conclusion and Applications (1 Cor 2:1–5)