THE FOOLISHNESS of GOD - 1 Cor 1:17-2:16

Intro:
A. This title may create an uncertainty in the minds of some - however, I want to assure you just as with last weeks lesson this is a lesson of knowledge, and confidence that the believer in God has.

B. 1 Cor 1:22-25 - emp the foolishness of God is wiser than men and His weakness is stronger than men.

1. 1 Corinthians 1:22-25 (NKJV) - 22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 but to those who are 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.

C. There has never been a time when the people of God has not been threatened with worldliness and false doctrine –
1. Just this past Wednesday - Billy Graham passed away and the accolades as America’s Pastor have sounded forth.
   a. For the good works he did as a man - he is not condemned, but that he spoke the words of men and deceived many into believing they were saved and are saved - he will stand in Judgment. Truly, “America’s Preacher/Pastor” is what he was - 2 Tim 4:3
   (1) 2 Timothy 4:3 (NKJV) - 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;
2. Today – the religious world, by and large, is at sea without a rudder or anchor – For they have forsaken the Word of God for the doctrines and commandments of men!

II. Divine Wisdom - does not always make sense to men (Ed’s invitational speech)

1. Numbers 21:4-8 (NKJV) - 4 Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. 5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses: “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread.” 6 So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. 7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. 8 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.”

2. Joshua 6:1-27 (NKJV) - 1 Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in. 2 And the Lord said to Joshua: “See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor. 3 You shall march around the city, all you men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days. 4 And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. 5 It shall come to pass, when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him.” 6 Then Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, “Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of the Lord.” 7 And he said to the people, “Proceed, and march around the
city, and let him who is armed advance before the ark of the Lord.” 8 So it was, when Joshua had
spoken to the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the
Lord advanced and blew the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them.
9 The armed men went before the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard came after
the ark, while the priests continued blowing the trumpets. 10 Now Joshua had commanded the
people, saying, “You shall not shout or make any noise with your voice, nor shall a word proceed
out of your mouth, until the day I say to you, ‘Shout!’ Then you shall shout.” 11 So he had the
ark of the Lord circle the city, going around it once. Then they came into the camp and lodged
in the camp. 12 And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord.
13 Then seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of the Lord went on
continually and blew with the trumpets. And the armed men went before them. But the rear guard
came after the ark of the Lord, while the priests continued blowing the trumpets. 14 And the
second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. So they did six days.
15 But it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early, about the dawning of the day, and
marched around the city seven times in the same manner. On that day only they marched around
the city seven times. 16 And the seventh time it happened, when the priests blew the trumpets,
that Joshua said to the people: “Shout, for the Lord has given you the city! 17 Now the city shall
be doomed by the Lord to destruction, it and all who are in it. Only Rahab the harlot shall live,
she and all who are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent. 18 And
you, by all means abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of
the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. 19 But all the silver and
gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are consecrated to the Lord; they shall come into the
treasury of the Lord.” 20 So the people shouted when the priests blew the trumpets. And it
happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great
shout, that the wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight
before him, and they took the city. 21 And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both
man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword. 22 But
Joshua had said to the two men who had spied out the country, “Go into the harlot’s house, and
from there bring out the woman and all that she has, as you swore to her.” 23 And the young men
who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, and all
that she had. So they brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel. 24 But
they burned the city and all that was in it with fire. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of
bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. 25 And Joshua spared Rahab
the harlot, her father’s household, and all that she had. So she dwells in Israel to this day, because
she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho. 26 Then Joshua charged them at
that time, saying, “Cursed be the man before the Lord who rises up and builds this city Jericho;
he shall lay its foundation with his firstborn, and with his youngest he shall set up its gates.” 27
So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout all the country.

3. 2 Kings 5:1-19 (NKJV) - 1 Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a
great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the Lord had given victory
to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, but a leper. 2 And the Syrians had gone out on
raids, and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman’s
wife. 3 Then she said to her mistress, “If only my master were with the prophet who is in
Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy.” 4 And Naaman went in and told his master,
saying, “Thus and thus said the girl who is from the land of Israel.” 5 Then the king of Syria said,
“Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel.” So he departed and took with him ten
talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing. 6 Then he brought
the letter to the king of the Israel, which said, Now be advised, when this letter comes to you, that
I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may heal him of his leprosy. 7 And it happened, when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and said, “Am I God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of his leprosy? Therefore please consider, and see how he seeks a quarrel with me.” 8 So it was, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, “Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.”

9 Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha’s house. 10 And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean.” 11 But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, “Indeed, I said to myself, ‘He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.’ 12 Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage. 13 And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, “My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, ‘Wash, and be clean’?” 14 So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. 15 And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, “Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, please take a gift from your servant.” 16 But he said, “As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing.” And he urged him to take it, but he refused. 17 So Naaman said, “Then, if not, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord. 18 Yet in this thing may the Lord pardon your servant: when my master goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the Lord please pardon your servant in this thing.” 19 Then he said to him, “Go in peace.” So he departed from him a short distance.

4. **Philippians 2:5-10** (NKJV) - 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

5. **Acts 2:38** (NKJV) - 38 Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

   a. No call to the altar to pray!
   b. No accept Jesus as your personal savior in prayer!

B. **Corinth Was a Place Where Philosophy, (i.e. love of wisdom) Was Very Important** - (At least four dozen distinct competing philosophical systems were in play)


1. **Acts 18:1-11** (NKJV) - 1 After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth. 2 And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them. 3 So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers. 4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks. 5 When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul
was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. 6 But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, “Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.” 7 And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man named Justus, one who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. 8 Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized. 9 Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, “Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; 10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.” 11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

2. **1 Corinthians 1:17-18** (NKJV) - 17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, **not with wisdom of words**, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. 18 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**.
   a. Not to baptize in his own name, *(1:13-15)*
      (1) **1 Corinthians 1:13-15** (NKJV) - 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name.
   b. (cf. **Mat 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16; Acts 18:8**)
      (1) **Matthew 28:18-20** (NKJV) - 18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.
      (2) **Mark 16:15** (NKJV) - 15 And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.
      (a) **Mark 16:16** (NKJV) - 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.
      (3) **Acts 18:8** (NKJV) - 8 Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.

### III. The Foolishness of God - vrs the Wisdom of Men - 1 Cor 1:19-31


1. **1 Corinthians 1:19-20** (NKJV) - 19 For it is written: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” 20 Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?


1. **1 Corinthians 1:21-25** (NKJV) - 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 but to those who are 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. **1 Corinthians 1:26-29** (NKJV) - 26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. 27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the
world to put to shame the things which are mighty; 28 and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, 29 that no flesh should glory in His presence.

D. Human Wisdom Exalts Man – Divine Wisdom Glorifies God – (1:30,31)
   1. **1 Corinthians 1:30** (NKJV) - 30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—
      a. **1 Corinthians 1:31** (NKJV) - 31 that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.”

IV. **God’s Wisdom (The Gospel and the Plan of Salvation) Has Been Revealed**
   A. The Manner of Paul’s Preaching – (2:1-5)
      1. **1 Corinthians 2:1-5** (NKJV) - 1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. 3 I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.
   B. The **Source of Paul’s Preaching** – the gospel - (2:6-13)
      1. **1 Corinthians 2:6-13** (NKJV) - 6 However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, 8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.
   C. Many Will Reject God’s Wisdom – For It Is Foolishness To Them – (2:14-16)
      1. **1 Corinthians 2:14-16** (NKJV) - 14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. 16 For “who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

V. **Conclusion:**
   A. You can choose today to Accept the Wisdom of God - or reject it for the wisdom of men.
   B. God’s Wisdom:
      1. **Hear** – *(Romans 10:17)(NKJV)* - 17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
      2. **Believe** – *(John 8:24)(NKJV)* - 24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”
      3. **Repent** – *(Acts 17:30)(NKJV)* - 30 Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now

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commands all men everywhere to repent,

4. Confess – *(Romans 10:9,10)*(NKJV) - 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

5. Be Baptized – *(Acts 2:38)* (NKJV) - 38 Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

6. Continue In The Faith – *(Col 1:23)* (NKJV) - 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

C. Man’s Wisdom - Hear, Believe = Saved? -This does not save man from his sins.

1. *Acts 18:8* (NKJV) - 8 Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, **hearing, believed and were baptized**.

D. OH, that we would learn to trust the wisdom of God than the foolishness of men!