

FOLLOWING CHRIST IN A
CORINTHIAN CULTURE
ANYONE CARE FOR A SLICE OF HUMBLE PIE?
I Corinthians 1

We've been discussing the culture of Corinth and how it applies to our Culture. How do we live as Christians in a culture that is not favorable toward Christianity? Lets read I Corinthians 1:18-31 and talk about how divisions in the church can be cause by false wisdom and divisive attitudes and actions.

Q: What was the subject of the division in the church (verses 10-17)?

A: They were arguing over who the best leader was and letting their preferences become reasons to divide.

Q: Why do you think the message of the cross sounds like foolishness to some? Why would you say it's not foolishness?

A: It's foolishness to those who think they can have eternal security through their own efforts. The cross isn't foolish though because it was Jesus who took our place, because the result of sin is death. But instead of following through on His promise to Adam that sin leads to death, Jesus stepped in the way of our "execution" for us and gave his own life so we could live.

Q: The word fool in the New Testament is often associated with the meaning of salt that has lost its flavor. In the Old Testament it means someone who is dull and resistant to transformation. In light of that what is Paul trying to say in verse 20 through 25?

A: He is saying that worldly wisdom doesn't understand or know the heart of God. Those who really know God and His way of doing things, may not look wise to the world, but they are the ones who are truly wise. Even our best wisdom and insights pale in comparison to God's. Those who don't get God though are those who don't want to get God...they resist His transforming work in their lives.

Q: Since verse 27 tells us that God chose the "foolish" (in the eyes of the world) to shame those who really do think that they themselves are wise, are Christians more humble as people?

A: We need to be but...often we aren't aware that being called isn't because He thinks we're special and He wants us to work for Him. He chose us because He loves us...period. He doesn't care about our "wisdom" or accomplishments or fame...because all of that amounts to nothing in comparison to who God is. Humility is not as common as it should be considering the fact that we are basically not the wisest ones the world brags about. This realization may keep some very proud people from humbling themselves before God, because He doesn't acknowledge their importance.

Q: This passage seems to jerk to attention those in the Corinth church who were looking down their noses at the less sophisticated brethren. If they weren't supposed to brag about their earthly accomplishments then what could they brag about?

A: In God alone. In the fact that the cross saved them. That they were nothing before Christ loved them and anything good that they do is because of Christ living in them, partnering with them and working through them. Verse 29 says that no one can brag in front of Jesus...but if we thought about it, how many times have we bragged as if Jesus couldn't hear?

Q: In conclusion how should we treat one another in the body of Christ in light of these verses?

A: With humility and respect. None of us are more important than the other to Jesus and His desire that we be of one mind and heart needs to be our goal as well.

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