

# “Looking Foolish, Being Wise”

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**1<sup>8</sup> 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.**

1 Corinthians 1.18 NIV

**17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.**

**1 Corinthians 1.17**

**19 For it is written:  
“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;  
the intelligence of the intelligent I  
will frustrate.”**

**<sup>20</sup> Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?**

**<sup>21</sup> For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.**

**1 Corinthians 1.19-21**

<sup>22</sup> Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, <sup>23</sup> but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,

<sup>24</sup> but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

<sup>25</sup> For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

1 Corinthians 1.22-25

“Left-handed, in other words, is precisely paradoxical power: power that looks for all the world like weakness, intervention that seems indistinguishable from nonintervention. More than that, it is guaranteed to stop no determined evildoers whatsoever.

It might, of course, touch and soften their hearts. But then again, it might not. It certainly didn't for Jesus. At first this might *not* seem like an exercise worthy of the name of power. But when you come to think about it, it IS power -

so much power in fact that it is the only thing in the world that evil can't touch. God in Christ died forgiving. With the dead body of Jesus, God wedged open the door between Himself and the world..."

Robert Farrar Capon, "The Parables of the Kingdom" p. 20

<sup>14</sup> Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests <sup>15</sup> and asked, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you

?” So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. <sup>16</sup> From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

Matthew 26.14-16

<sup>10</sup> Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days,

and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

<sup>11</sup> After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied...

Isaiah 53.10-11a

<sup>4</sup> Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.

<sup>5</sup> But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

<sup>6</sup> We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53.4-6

<sup>18</sup> 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.

1 Corinthians 1.18 NIV

“I could never myself believe in God if it were not for the cross. In the real world of pain, how could one worship a God who was immune to it? I turn to that lonely, twisted, tortured figure on the

cross, nails through hands and feet, back lacerated, limbs wrenched, brow bleeding from thorn-pricks, mouth dry and intolerably thirsty, plunged in God-forsaken darkness.

That is the God for me. He set aside his immunity to pain. He entered our world of flesh and blood, tears and death.”

*John R. W. Stott, “The Cross of Christ”*