

But God

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[0:00] All right, as I look for the passage, you can turn to Corinthians. And yes, I know you just sat down, so if you're able, out of respect to the Lord's holy word, let's read 1 Corinthians chapter 1, and we're going to do 18 through 27.

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. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the tutor of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 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. For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom.

But we preach Christ crucified. To the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, I am the last that should be up here sharing, but you can use the weak as we just read. You can use the foolish. You can use those that are simple.

And so I just pray that these words will come from you, and continue to help us to grow, which is the big word of sanctification, becoming more like you. And so thank you for your words that we can learn from. They're profitable. They do instruct us. They do help us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

[3:26] Amen. All right. Has anyone ever asked you what's your favorite verse? Do you have a favorite verse?

Let me hear some of them. And there's a great one. Others? Favorite verses? Strengthen me. Yes. The Lord is my shepherd. That's what I want. The Lord is my shepherd. So a great, great chapter. Any others who wants to share their favorite verses?

The Lord is my shepherd. Absolutely. Good verses. Any others?

I know Cindy's aunt, every single time she would write a card, she would sign Proverbs 3, 5, and 6, and then Psalms 37-something. I don't remember. And Becky's wonderful about putting down verses too.

[4:44] So, you know, for me, that's a hard one to answer because I have so many verses that I really appreciate, and God's word is so powerful. But, you know, what I can tell you is what my favorite two words are in the Bible, and that's but God. Those two words tell me that God isn't bounded by human attributes or capabilities or limitations.

He is far greater than that. The question, how big is your God, is a good one to contemplate. Man is limited by his strength. God is not. He is all-powerful, and he can do whatever he wants.

He has no restrictions or limitations. The Bible has hundreds of accounts documenting God's power. Creation in itself is evidence of God's incredible power.

Just for him to be able to speak everything into existence. If that's not power, I don't know what it is. Man is limited by his knowledge. God is not.

He knows all things, everything from eternity past until eternity future. There are no surprises or unknowns to God.

[6:21] God is all-wise. Man's wisdom is foolishness comparing to his. Man is limited by time. We only have a dedicated amount for each day, for each month, for each year, and for each lifetime.

God is not. God doesn't have a beginning, and he will not have an end. He does not exist in time, and so the past and the future is as if it's right now.

He knows all things, everything from the beginning to the end and right now. Lastly, God is sovereign, and man is not.

So what does sovereign mean? What does sovereign mean? You've heard of the sovereign ruler? He's fair. He's over all. Yes. Sovereign means that God is the one who has the supreme authority and control over all of creation.

[7 : 44] Man may think he is calling us shots, but he is not. Man may believe he has it all under control, but he doesn't.

I like what Psalms 2.4 says. He who sits in the heavens shall laugh. The Lord shall hold them in derision.

This verse shows that human plots to overthrow the Almighty are ultimately futile. God is God, and we are not.

God has not lost control of his creation even for one nanosecond. So let's look again at verse 27 of 1 Corinthians.

Hopefully you still have that open. And what does that say? So what are some of the foolish things of the world?

[8 : 59] You know, for starters, salvation. You know, according to John 3.16, which I'm sure most of you know, that for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Also, there are other familiar verses such as Ephesians 2.8 and 9. For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves.

It is a gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. And in John 14, Christ himself said, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. So if you think about it, according to man's wisdom, it's foolish to think that there is only one way to God and to obtain eternal life just by believing and having faith.

It's a gift from God. The world struggles with that, especially the part of there is only one way to God through Jesus Christ.

[10 : 15] And it sounds foolish to them. And salvation, being a gift of God, is no different to them than when a telemarketer or you get junk mail that may give you an offer of a free gift or a prize without any purchase.

We all know the saying, if it sounds too good to be true, it is. If you were to study most of the dominant religions of today, just about every one of them is tied to good works or ethical behavior or whether your good deeds outweigh your bad ones.

Christianity is different. It's not man trying to reach up, proving his love to God, but God verse to man and thus proving his love.

The but God verse that I want to use is from Ephesians 2, 4 through 6. It says, And then in parentheses it says, By grace you have been saved.

And raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Other teachings from the Bible that seem foolish to the world, the bad things that happen to us are not necessarily bad.

[11 : 56] Most everyone you talk to thinks that when something bad happens to a person, it's because they deserve it. It's their karma. Many Christians even struggle with this.

But as children of God, we know, because of Romans 8, 28, that we can trust God in all circumstances and situations, no matter how foolish it seems, and even with our mistakes, that God can work everything together for good to those that love him.

There are numerous accounts in the Bible where bad things happen to innocent, blameless, non-deserving people.

One of my favorite accounts is that of Joseph and the suffering that he had to endure. Just because his dad showed him a little favoritism, which was no fault of his own, his brothers were planning to kill him.

But instead, they figured selling him would be more profitable and desirable. Not an easy life to be hated by your siblings, ripped away from your family as a youth, and transported to a foreign country where you have no friends or family or knowledge of the language or even an

understanding of the culture.

[13 : 24] While there in Egypt, he was sold again as a servant, accused falsely for sexual advances towards his boss's wife, thrown into prison.

He was betrayed by a fellow prisoner. And all along, he was trusting God to work things out. That's exactly what God did. Worked it out to allow Joseph to become second in command and in essence, used by God to save his family and the country of Egypt and the surrounding region from death and starvation.

Genesis 50, 19 through 20 documents the emotional reunion several decades later with his brothers and father and when he finally reunited with them and revealed to them his identity.

Listen as I read those couple verses from Genesis again. Joseph said to them, So did you catch that?

But God meant it for good. All the troubles and hardships he endured leading up to that moment, God meant it for good. 1 Corinthians 10, 13 was written a good 2,000 years after Joseph, but he lived this truth very well.

[15 : 21] It says, No temptation has overtaken you except as such is common to man. But God is faithful. But God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able.

But with the temptation will also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. The word temptation, it's the same root word as testing or trials.

So if you want to put those words in there, so no trial or testing has overtaken you except such is common to man. Joseph is a wonderful example of bad things happening to good people.

But God can take what seems evil or bad and work it out for good. And I remind you, it's because he is all-powerful, all-knowing, and ever-present, and sovereign.

One of my favorite current-day examples of but God working out bad things or a bad situation for the good is Johnny Erickson Tada.

[16 : 40] You know, when at the age of 17, she broke her neck diving into a shallow lake and became a quadriplegic. For several years, she was so angry and mad at God, she wanted to commit suicide.

But eventually, she quit fighting and allowed God to start using her the way she was. Since then, she has authored more than 60 books.

She starred in her own biographical, movie, Johnny. She has started several international organizations. She is an accomplished artist, paints with paintbrushes in her mouth.

She sings beautifully and speaks daily on over a thousand radio stations in the U.S. and overseas and conducts many conferences throughout the year.

Many individuals thought, what a wasted life when she had her accident because she was only 17 years old and a very athletic girl, but God.

[17 : 52] Another foolish thought, according to worldly wisdom, we know that, we know those of us that are believers in Christ, the instant we take our last breath, we are transferred to God's presence in heaven and there we will be with him the rest of eternity.

So many believe that once we take our last breath, it's over and we just rot in the ground. In Psalms 49, King David wrote, But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave for he shall receive me.

Selah. In 2 Samuel 12, it contains the story of David and his affair with Bathsheba and how the baby was born with several illnesses, severe illness and died after a week.

And King David responds to the baby's death was, But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

So King David had that confidence that one day he will be reunited with his son. We can have that same confidence if we put our trust in Christ, in Jesus Christ.

[19 : 17] In another category that seems foolish to man is in the area of trusting God, trusting a God that you can't see. So many people live by the philosophy if they can't see it, they won't believe it.

And that can be a challenge or even a struggle for many of us. What's the difference of having faith in God or trusting God?

what is the difference between faith and trust? What is the difference? What is faith?

Okay. Believing in something you don't see. What's trust? What's the difference? What's the difference? Okay.

Yes. So faith is closely connected to knowledge. What's in your mind? What's in your head? Trust is closely connected to your behavior.

[20 : 27] Faith is knowing that God will provide for your every need. trust is not worrying where your next meal will come from when you're broke or destitute.

Faith is knowing God can heal you. Trust is being totally at peace when you hear devastating news like you have cancer or an incurable disease.

Faith is knowing God will take care of you. trust is when you have a calmness after you've been told you're fired or laid off.

Faith is knowing that God loves you. Trust is feeling his arms of love wrapped around you when you're feeling depressed or after the loss of a loved one.

So Wednesday nights we've been studying in 1 Samuel the life of David and how he was constantly on the run from Saul because King Saul because he wanted to kill him.

[21 : 37] Not that David had done anything wrong but King Saul was jealous of him. Twice David had a perfect chance to kill him and take revenge but he didn't.

He had faith God could take care of him but even more he trusted God to do it in his way and in his time.

For nearly 15 years after David was anointed king he waited and trusted. Turn with me will you to Psalms 37.

Psalms 37 close to the middle of your Bible. And this is David reflecting on his time when he was on the run from King Saul.

And I'm going to kind of go through it really quickly. Verse 1 because this is a powerful but God Psalms I like to call it of David.

[22 : 55] Verse 1 Do not fret because of evildoers nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. Verse 3 Trust in the Lord and do good.

Dwell in the land and feed on his faithfulness. Verse 4 Delight yourself also in the Lord and he shall give you the desires of your heart.

Verse 5 Commit your way to the Lord trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass. Verse 7 Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him.

Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way. Then jump down all the way to verse 34 Wait on the Lord.

and keep his way and he shall exalt you to inherit the land. And then the last two verses of that chapter But the salvation of the righteous is from the Lord.

[24 : 01] He is their strength in time of trouble and the Lord shall help them and deliver them. He shall deliver them from the wicked and save them because they trust him.

That psalm is a great psalm to help us to learn to trust God you know wait and to delight ourselves in the Lord to commit our ways.

Those are all great words of trust. 1 Samuel 23 it records And David stayed in the strongholds in the wilderness and remained in the mountains in the wilderness of Ziph.

Saul sought him every day but God did not deliver him into his hand. So I just covered a good four categories of biblical perspective that are foundational to our Christian belief that comes across as foolishness to the world.

But the truth be known the whole Bible especially the New Testament is full of teachings that seem foolish to the world and even hard at times for believers to understand.

[25 : 18] You know one of the biggest challenges to explain to the world that our God is a triune God made up of three entities God the Father God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Three parts but God is one. And I'll warn you about trying to explain 2 Corinthians 6 8-10 to someone who doesn't have any interest in the Bible.

It will really seem foolish to them. The Apostle Paul was describing being a minister of the gospel and says by honor and dishonor by evil report and good report as deceivers and yet true as unknown and yet known well known as dying and behold we live as chastened and yet not killed as sorrowful yet always rejoicing as poor yet making rich many rich as having nothing and yet possessing all things.

Have fun trying to explain that to somebody. So yeah a lot of our doctrine and beliefs seem foolish to people.

And what about in the four gospels where you find Christ saying whoever finds their life will lose it and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it or the first shall be last and the last shall be first or another of his sayings the greatest among you will be your servant or Christ teaching about loving your enemies and blessing those who curse you do good to those who hate you and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.

[27 : 21] Most people would laugh in your face at that type of teaching. And the last two I'll share are from the Apostle Paul in Philippians 3-7 but whatever gain I had I counted it as loss for the sake of Christ.

And 2 Corinthians 12-10 when I am weak then I am strong. Paul knew this very well and he added that all that God's grace is always all sufficient even in our weak times.

So yes 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.

But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise. Alright let's close in prayer. Father we thank you for your words.

We thank you for your challenges. We thank you that when we open up scripture sometimes it doesn't make sense but it's not worldly wisdom it's godly wisdom.

[28 : 43] And help us just to let the Holy Spirit speak to us and change us and challenge us through your words.

We pray in Jesus precious name. Amen. Amen.