

NO LESSON ONE

James Rafferty 2026 Q2 L2 Power to those who are being saved

Tuesday

July 7

Power to Those Who Are Being Saved

The message of 1 Corinthians 1:18 is too clear for one to miss the point. What the Cross means depends on the way one looks at it. It is foolishness for those in rebellion against God, but it is power for those who long for His salvation.

Read Colossians 1:20 and 1 Peter 2:24. What did Jesus accomplish for us on the cross?

As we have already seen, in preaching the gospel, one must avoid "words of eloquent

wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of
its power" (1 Cor. 1:17, ESV).

THE CROSS OF CHRIST IS NOT COMPLICATED
SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY. IT IS NOT ABOUT DOCTRINAL
INFORMATION. IF THIS WERE THE CASE THE DEVILS
WOULD BE OUR INSTRUCTORS, FOR THEY KNOW MORE OF
THE BIBLE AND DOGMA THAN THE MOST INTELLIGENT
HUMAN BEING. THE CROSS IS POWER BECAUSE IT
REPRESENTS THE EXACTLY OPPOSITE OF KNOWLEDGE,
PEDIGREE AND INTELLECT. NOT THAT IT IS ABSENT OF
INTELLIGENCE. THE CROSS OF CHRIST IS THE VERY
DEFINITION OF THE SCIENCE OF ALL SCIENCES. THE
CROSS IS THE SCIENCE OF LIFE ETERNAL, IT IS THE
SCIENCE OF GOD -- WHO HE IS, WHAT HE DOES, AND
WHAT MAKES HIM TICK.

THE EARTH DECLARES THE SCIENCE OF THE CROSS.
EVERY PARTICLE OF LIFE ON PLANET EARTH TAKES TO
GIVE. THE RAINS FEED THE CREEKS, FEEDS THE
STREAMS FEEDS THE RIVERS THAT FEED THE OCEANS
FROM WHICH COMES THE RAINS. IT IS ONLY THE

SELFISH HEART OF FALLEN MAN AT ITS WORST THAT
MAKES HIMSELF THE END POINT OR GOAL OF CREATION.
TO THE FALLEN HUMAN HEART IT IS FOOLISHNESS TO
GIVE WITHOUT AT LEAST EXPECTING EQUAL OR GREATER
IN RETURN. (LUKE 6:34-SINNERS LEND TO SINNERS
HOPING TO RECEIVE AS MUCH AGAIN) TO GOD THE VERY
ACT OF GIVING ITSELF IS A RETURN -FOR IT IS MORE
BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE. (ACTS 20:35).

In light of 1 Corinthians 1:17, it becomes
easier to understand why the opposite of
foolishness is the power of God, and not human
wisdom (1 Cor. 1:18). The Cross, which is so
contrary to human wisdom, reveals just how
foolish human wisdom really is.

The Greek text of 1 Corinthians 1:18
suggests that "those who are perishing" (NKJV)
are receiving the result of their actions. The
text can read like this: "For the message of the
cross is foolishness to those who are destroying
themselves." The Greek verb *apollymi* (AP-OL'-

LOO-MEE) ("to perish") can also mean "to
destroy" (John 10:10). In fact, apollymi (AP-
OL'-LOO-MEE) is translated as "destroy" in 1
Corinthians 1:19.

THIS IS BECAUSE SELF INDULGENCE IS DEATH. THE
MESSAGE OF THE CROSS IS NOT PRIMARILY A
THEOLOGICAL DOGMA, BUT A CALL BACK TO THE SELF
SACRIFICING, SELF DENYING IMAGE OF GOD. THE
CROSS AT ITS VERY CORE - SACRIFICES SELFISHNESS,
DIES TO THE CLAMORS OF FALLEN HUMAN NATURE AND
LIVES AS GOD CREATED US TO LIVE, A LIFE OF SELF
SACRIFICING JOY FILLED SERVICE AND LOVE TOWARDS
GOD AND MAN.

[What is happening here? Paul provides a
biblical foundation for this statement in verse
18, about these people perishing, by quoting in
verse 19 God's words in Isaiah 29:14. In verse
19, God is the one behind the destruction, which

seems to contradict the self-destroying pride mentioned right before. However, there is no contradiction. The idea is that God will destroy that which is already destroying itself to begin with.]

GOD WILL EVENTUALLY HONOR THE FREE CHOICE OF EVERY HUMAN TO DESTROY THEMSELVES BY SELFISHNESS.

In contrast to those being destroyed, the phrase "to us who are being saved" (1 Cor. 1:18, NKJV) indicates that salvation comes only from God. Paul is saying that we are being saved; that is, we are not saving ourselves. We, of course, can't. Our salvation has an external source. While destruction is self-caused, salvation can only be granted, a gift of grace to sinners. As is clear in 1 Corinthians 1:21, it is God who saves those who believe. Foolishness, in this sense, is the act of rejecting what God has offered humanity through

the cross of Christ (1 Cor. 1:30), and thus
bringing upon oneself destruction THAT WE HAVE
CHOSEN.

FROM MONDAY'S LESSON (PASTOR RYAN):

The foolishness Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 1:18, 23 is
not as much related to intellectual scarcity as it is to immoral
behavior and thought, to lack of discernment, and even to
rebellion against God. This explains why he spoke so much about
this topic throughout 1 Corinthians.

1 COR. 1:30 LISTS THE GIFTS OF THE PLAN OF
SALVATION:

RIGHTEOUSNESS (JUSTIFICATION)

SANCTIFICATION

REDEMPTION (GLORIFICATION)

THESE GIFTS COME TO US FROM THE LIFE, DEATH AND
RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST. THEY ARE GIFTS
THAT WE CANNOT EARN. THEY ARE GIFTS THAT WE DO
NOT HAVE AND CANNOT EARN BY OUR WORKS. LISTED
WITH THIS GROUP OF THREE GIFTS THERE IS A
FOURTH. THAT GIFT IS WISDOM. AND BECAUSE IT IS
LISTED WITH THE THREE ALREADY MENTIONED, THIS

GIFT TOO IS NOT NATURAL TO THE FALLEN HUMAN HEART. OUR HUMAN WISDOM CANNOT BE DEPENDED UPON AND EARNS US NOTHING. HUMAN WISDOM DOES IN FACT GET IN THE WAY OF GODS WISDOM, JUST LIKE OUR WORKS GET IN THE WAY OF GODS WORKS. YET HERE IS MANS WISDOM ALWAYS UPENDING GODS WISDOM GIFTED TO US IN CHRIST. IN 1COR 1:30 WISDOM IS OF THE SAME NATURE AS THE OTHER THREE. IN OTHER WORDS, FALLEN MAN HAS NO WISDOM BUT FROM GOD. AND IF WE REFUSE THE WISDOM OF JESUS WE ARE LEFT TO OUR HUMAN WISDOM WHICH IS THE FOOLISHNESS OF THE WORLD.

FOR EXAMPLE: 2 BILLION PEOPLE PROFESS TO BE CHRISTIANS TODAY. CHRISTIANITY IS BASED ON THE CHRIST AND HIS TEACHINGS. YET IF YOU WERE TO ASK THESE TWO MILLION PEOPLE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A PERSON DIES THEY WOULD TELL YOU ANYTHING BUT WHAT CHRIST ACTUALLY TAUGHT US IN JOHN CHAPTER 11. IF YOU WERE TO TELL THEM WHAT THE CHRIST TEACHES, THAT WHEN YOU DIE YOU "SLEEP" IN AN

UNCONSCIOUS STATE UNTIL THE RESURRECTION THEY WOULD CALL THAT FOOLISHNESS. WHY? BECAUSE THEY HAVE REJECTED THE WISDOM OF CHRIST. THE GIFT OF THE WISDOM OF CHRIST WHICH IS DIRECTLY CONNECTED TO THE THREE OTHER GIFTS OF JUSTIFICATION, SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION.

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23, NKJV). In what ways does this verse restate what Paul was saying in 1 Corinthians 1:18, 19?

DEATH MEANS DEATH, NOT ETERNAL TORMENT IN A MAKE BELIEVE ETERNAL PLACE OF SUFFERING. THE LOST PERISH, THEY DO NOT LIVE FOREVER IN THE ETERNAL FIRE OF GODS PRESENCE (ONLY THE RIGHTEOUS CAN STAND ON THE SEA OF GLASS MINGLED WITH FIRE (REVELATION 15). THE WAGES OF SIN IS ETERNAL PUNISHMENT NOT ETERNAL PUNISHING. YET TOO MANY CHRISTIANS WOULD LABEL THIS BASIC BIBLE TEACHING

AS FOOLISHNESS. WHY, BECAUSE THEY ARE EXCHANGING
THE WISDOM OF CHRIST FOR THE WISDOM OF THIS
WORLD. LETS NOT DO THAT FRIENDS. IN JESUS NAME.
AMEN.