

3ABN SABBATH SCHOOL PANEL

02 - Monday – July 9, 2026

Christ, the Power and Wisdom of God

In 1 Corinthians 1:19, 20, 30, and 31, Paul talks about how God’s wisdom and human wisdom are incredibly different and, thus, mutually exclusive. Notice that Paul does not reject wisdom as such, but he rejects the kind of human wisdom that tries to compete with God. Human wisdom is incapable of freeing men from sin. Only Christ, the wisdom of God, can perform this work.

I. The Great Contrast: Two Types of Wisdom

Key Texts:

1 Corinthians 1:19-20, 30-31 (NKJV) “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? (30) But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— (31) that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.”

Romans 1:16 (NKJV) “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.”

Core Teaching:

- Paul does **not reject wisdom**.
- He rejects **human wisdom that competes with God**.

Key Contrast:

Human Wisdom	God’s Wisdom
Self-reliant	Christ-centered
Intellectual pride	Humble faith
Cannot save	Saves completely
Leads to confusion	Leads to salvation

II. The Cross: Power and Wisdom of God

Key Texts: 1 Corinthians 1:18, 21, 24 (NKJV) “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. (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. (24) but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”

Romans 1:16 (NKJV) “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.”

Key Insight: The **same group** is described as:

“Those being saved” — “Those who believe” — “Those who are called”

These are **people living by faith in Christ: Power of God**

- Christ saves from sin
- The gospel is **transformation power**, not just information.

Wisdom of God

God solved the sin problem **through Christ**

- **THE WORLD:** John 1:29 (NKJV) “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”
- **GOD’S CHILDREN:** Matthew 1:21 (NKJV) “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name **JESUS**, for He will save His people from their sins.”

EMP: What human reasoning could not do—**Jesus accomplished.**

III. Human Wisdom Cannot Save

Key Text: 1 Corinthians 1:21 (NKJV) “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.”

2 Timothy 3:15 (NKJV) “and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

Human wisdom: Cannot remove sin — Cannot reveal God fully — Cannot transform the heart

Only Christ makes us “**wise for salvation**”

Question 1: What point is Paul making in 1 Corinthians 1:24–29?

Text: 1 Corinthians 1:24-29 (NKJV) “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. (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.”

Answer: Paul’s Central Point: God deliberately uses what the world considers foolish, weak, and insignificant to accomplish His greatest work—so that no human being can boast.

Breakdown:

1. **The Cross appears foolish to human wisdom**
 - Salvation through a crucified Savior seems illogical
2. **God uses the weak to shame the strong**
 - Not because God lacks power
 - But to reveal that **true power comes from Him**
3. **God bypasses human pride**
 - He chooses those who will depend on Him
4. **Purpose: Eliminate boasting**
 - Salvation is **100% God’s work**

Verse 29: “So that no flesh should glory in His presence”

IV. “Foolishness” and “Weakness” Explained

Key Text: 1 Corinthians 1:25 (NKJV) “Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

Clarification:

- God is **not actually foolish or weak**
- This is **human perception**

Reality:

- God’s “**foolishness**” > man’s greatest wisdom
- God’s “**weakness**” > man’s greatest strength

Question 2: What message is there for us in 1 Corinthians 1:26?

Text: 1 Corinthians 1:26 (NKJV) “For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.”

Answer: Personal Application Message:

1. **God’s calling is not based on human status** Not many: Wise, Mighty, Noble

God is not impressed by: Education — Influence — Social standing

2. **God values humility over ability:** He chooses: The willing, The surrendered, Depending on Him

3. **Anyone can be used by God**

- Your background does not disqualify you
- Your weakness can become God’s platform

4. **Warning Against Pride** If you rely on: Your intellect, Your achievements, Your influence, You may miss **God’s calling**

Power Statement: “God is not looking for the most qualified—He is looking for the most surrendered.”

V. Christ: Our Wisdom and Righteousness

Key Text: 1 Corinthians 1:30-31 (NKJV) “(30) But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— (31) that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.”

Key Insight: In Christ we receive: Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, Redemption. Everything needed for salvation is found **in Jesus**

VI. Final Teaching Summary

- Human wisdom cannot save
- The Cross looks foolish—but it is God’s power
- God uses the weak to accomplish His purposes
- Salvation removes all human boasting

Closing Challenge

The question is not: “Am I wise enough?”

The question is: “Am I humble enough to receive God’s wisdom?”

Short Closing Appeal

“Lord, strip away my dependence on human wisdom. Teach me to trust in the power of the Cross.
Make me humble enough to be used by You.”