

Simply Above

I have been looking forward to the upcoming missions conference and hearing about preaching the gospel to all different peoples and cultures. As such, I have been thinking a lot about the contrast of the gospel with the wisdom the world presses on us in different forms in different cultures. Though worldly wisdom takes many forms today, 1 Corinthians describes the historical situation with remarkable relevance.

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

18 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." 20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, **it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified**, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

The contrast between the values of the world and the values of Christians is surprisingly simple. Back in Paul's day, the world was seeking supernatural signs and eloquent persuasion **designed to impress man**. Compared to that spectacle, Christians may be tempted to see the gospel as weak and unimpressive. But the simple truth in vs. 24-25 is that **we have God's plan, God's power, and God's wisdom. What could be better than something directly from God?** We don't have to worry about whether our gospel is as impressive to man as the flashy memes and political dreams of today's society. Though our gospel may not be as complicated or sophisticated as worldly schemes today, **we have God's own son**.

Paul tells us the gospel hinges around preaching "Christ crucified." This act of bloody, humbling, sacrificial love was opposite the impressive show the world was looking for. Yet it is what we preach to the nations and preach to ourselves. We have a Savior with such a love for us that He would take our shame and pay the death of our sins on a cross such that we may live with Him forever. The chorus of this year's missions conference song, based on this passage, is meant to encourage us with this simple gospel message:

*We've got a friend, who knows each name.
Our sin's death to hell, He washed away.
Simply through belief, He saved even me.
And proved our hope, sealed at calvary.*

His gospel is simply above every other hope created by man in our loud and flashy world. I can't wait to hear and sing about it with you all.

Jacob