

## Is Christianity Stupid?

1 Corinthians 1:18—2:10

(black Bible page 952; Children's Bible page 1420)

This series is about how the good news of Jesus' death and Resurrection applied to real life and church problems in ancient Greece.

- Today's message: the death of Jesus vs. the influence of Greek "wisdom"

1:18–21: **The Greeks** think the cross is foolish. It's stupid. *Why?*

- A quick intro to ancient Greece: it's all about culture. This includes philosophy, "the love of wisdom." Socrates, Plato, Aristotle.
- But why would the cross look *foolish*?
  - One example is Plato's legacy: *The material world doesn't really matter. It's the world of Ideas that matters.* Now if you thought this is true and wise, then what would you think about the cross?

1:22–25: **The Jews** have an intellectual difficulty with the cross as well. The cross is *weak*. It is so non-miraculous.

- Compare with Moses and the Exodus! An explosion of miracles

1:26–31: **The church of common people.** Want to be part of the world's elite? Sorry, God is in the business of choosing ordinary people, and even the less than ordinary.

2:1–10: **Why the focus on the cross?** (see 2:2 especially)

- *Not* because salvation is *only* about the cross. To completely save us, Christ's work also includes the Resurrection (Rom 4:25 and 1 Cor 15), his continual intercession at the Father's right hand (Hebrews 7:25), as well as the second coming (Hebrews 9:28).

- Instead: "For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (2:2). The underlined words are key: it's about reaching the Greeks with the gospel, by calling attention to the cross for a head-on collision with Greek "wisdom."

- No one recognized God's wisdom when Jesus was crucified! – and certainly not the elite and "wise" of the world (2:8–9).

The ancient Greeks and ancient Jews had different intellectual problems with the cross, as we have seen above, and ones that we probably don't consider that compelling today.

- But do we modern Americans have a *different* intellectual problem with the cross? There is at least one that leaps to mind...

Application: Every cultural moment has its own "wisdom" that makes God's wisdom – the wisdom of the cross – look stupid. Yet the cross is the salvation and power of God!

- How can we resist the wisdom of the age? Surely renewing our minds with Scripture is the key part of the answer! (Rom 12:1–2) We need to listen to God's wisdom and apply ourselves to understanding it.

- Read Scripture. *Know it. Think it. Sing it. Live it!*
  - A video resource collection to help you: [TheBibleProject.com](http://TheBibleProject.com)
  - Also see all the features at [BibleGateway.com](http://BibleGateway.com)