

Connect

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

Please share some of your experiences, times when you were "ashamed of the gospel" or times when you were surprisingly brave in sharing the gospel.

What made the difference?

Verses - 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 (CSB)

18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but
it is the power of God to us who are being saved. 19 For it is written,

I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,

and I will set aside the intelligence of the intelligent.

20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is
the debater of this age? Hasn't God made the world's wisdom foolish? 21
For since, in God's wisdom, the world did not know God through wisdom,
God was pleased to save those who believe through the foolishness of
what is preached. 22 For the Jews ask for signs and the Greeks seek
wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews
and foolishness to the Gentiles. 24 Yet to those who are called, both Jews
and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, 25 because
God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is
stronger than human strength.

Study

1. Christ sent Paul to Corinth, "to preach the gospel - not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ will not be emptied of its effect" **(v.17)**
    a. What **is** the effect of the cross of Christ?
    b. **How** might the cross of Christ be emptied of its effect?
    c. Is Paul thinking here of the **style** of gospel preaching or its **content**?
2. Paul says **(v.18)** there are two groups of people: those who are perishing and those who are being saved. Paul includes himself and his readers among those being saved. **Who is perishing? Why are they perishing?**
3. Paul answers first **(v.19)** by citing Isaiah 29.14, where God through Isaiah condemns the worldly wise who reject him, and promises to destroy them and their worldly wisdom while he promises to save those who trust him.
    a. Can you see how **Jesus himself** fulfills Isaiah 29.14
    b. Can you see how **those who reject Jesus** also fulfill Isaiah 29:14.
4. Paul continues **(vv.20,21)** by saying, in effect, that no man has ever come to know God or obtain salvation through any kind of human wisdom. God only saves those who believe through the foolishness of what is preached. The Greek word here translated as "what is preached" is ***kerygma***, which means ***"the apostolic proclamation of salvation through Jesus Christ."***
5. **Why** is the kerygma foolishness to those who are perishing? **(vv. 22,23)**.
6. Why and how do those who **are** being saved come to understand that the cross is the power and the wisdom of God, which is far better than any human wisdom or strength, and which alone can save us? **(v.24, 25)**

Share

1. Regarding the simple gospel (not of wisdom and intelligence, v.19):
    a. How **did** the gospel appeal to you when you first heard and understood it and began to believe?
    b. How **does** the gospel keep you moving forward *on a daily basis*?
    c. How **will** you apply the gospel to your everyday life, *even more*?

Minister to one another through sharing specific prayer requests.