

## 1 Corinthians 1:10-31 **Call for unity – Power of the Cross**

### Call for unity

10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

### Contentions in the Church challenged

11 For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. 12 Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

### Paul's calling

14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name. 16 Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other. 17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

### Foolishness to the perishing – Power of God to the Saints in Message of the Cross

18 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. 19 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? 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. 22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 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. 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."

NKJV

Facts Revealed:

### Call for unity [1 Corinthians 1:10]

✠ There is a great need for unity among the members of the Body of Christ, the Church. [Psalm 133:1, Ephesians 4:3, 13, Romans 15:5-6, Philippians 1:27, 2:2, 1 Peter 3:8]

- ✧ To avoid confusion within the Church and toward those outside the Church, the message must be consistent and in harmony one with another.
- ✧ Discord and division makes the work of the Church ineffective.
- ✧ Paul therefore, calls for us to be perfectly joined together in mind and judgment.
- ✧ Unity must be based on the Word of God as originally presented as the supreme authority for Christian doctrine. [1 Corinthians 15:1-2, 2 Timothy 1:13, Revelation 3:3]
- ✧ Those who **believe** the Gospel are perfectly agreed.
- ✧ Those who **interpret** the Gospel are widely divided by what they believe and teach, which is the basis of denominationalism with each group following the teachings of different men, their founding leader.

#### Contentions in the Church challenged [1 Corinthians 1:11-13]

- ✧ By addressing their tendency to follow different men, even men God had established as Apostles, Paul was seeing the effect of the spirit of denominationalism and condemning it.
- ✧ Paul learned of the problem from men of Chloe's household who had been sent to ask him about marriage, things sacrificed to idols, and conduct at the Lord's Table.
- ✧ Paul asked why are they claiming to follow Himself, Apollos, or Cephas (Peter) when Christ was the One who was crucified for them.
- ✧ All of the Apostles mentioned are preaching the same Jesus Christ Who is the only Savior.
- ✧ Therefore the focus should be on Jesus Christ only, and not on men.

#### Paul's calling [1 Corinthians 1:14-17]

- ✧ Paul expressed thankfulness that he had only baptized a very few, lest anyone should say he baptized in his own name (authority).
- ✧ Jesus had not sent Paul to baptize, but to preach the Gospel.
- ✧ In preaching the Gospel, Paul did not attempt to persuade people with the wisdom of human logic, but by the evidence God had provided in the death and resurrection of Christ.
- ✧ Paul demonstrated the purpose of God in sending Jesus to the Cross.
- ✧ Human logic would make God's work of the cross to be of no effect.

#### Foolishness to the perishing – Power of God to the Saints in Message of the Cross [1 Corinthians 1:18-19]

- ✧ The message that God provided Salvation from the sins of the world through the death of Jesus on the Cross had contrasting reception between hearers.
- ✧ To the unsaved who are perishing, the message of the Cross is foolishness.
- ✧ To the believing Saints, the message of the Cross is the demonstration of the Power of God provided for the covering of sin and the salvation of the soul.
- ✧ Therefore the reaction of the hearer toward the Gospel of the Cross becomes a point of discernment regarding the destiny of the individual.
- ✧ Paul referenced the words of Isaiah to indicate the folly of human reasoning:
 

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." [Isaiah 29:14]

#### Weakness of human reasoning [1 Corinthians 1:20-25]

- ✧ Human reasoning of the wise, the scribe and the disputer (philosopher debater) did not bring men to the knowledge of God.
- ✧ God, in His wisdom, demonstrated the weakness of man's logic, and was pleased to use the so called foolishness of the Gospel message preached to save those who **believe**.
- ✧ Salvation is not for those who reason it out, but for those who believe the message and to whom God will impute righteousness.

- ✧ Jews seek a sign.
- ✧ Greeks seek human reasoning as wisdom.
- ✠ The Gospel message is Jesus Christ crucified for the sins of the world.
  - ✧ Jews find it to be a stumbling block because of their traditional concepts.
  - ✧ Greeks find it to be foolishness to think that the death of a man can provide Salvation for anyone.
  - ✧ The Saved, both Jews and Greeks find the Gospel message to reveal the power and wisdom of God in dealing with the sin problem.
- ✠ The foolishness of God is wiser than men.
- ✠ The weakness of God is stronger than men.

### Calling of God [\[1 Corinthians 1:26-28\]](#)

- ✠ God does not call many who according to the flesh are wise, mighty, or noble.
- ✠ 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; 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.

### God's Purpose [\[1 Corinthians 1:29-31\]](#)

- ✠ The purpose of God in using the unimpressive, is to prevent men from exalting themselves in their own pride in the presence of God.
  - ✧ Human pride is totally unacceptable to God.
- ✠ In the presence of God, we are in Christ Jesus.
  - ✧ Jesus became the wisdom of God and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption for us.
  - ✧ Since it all is God's doing through Jesus Christ, then all our glorying must be in the Lord.
  - ✧ All praise goes to God, because the plan of Salvation in Messiah Jesus originated from God.

- ✠ Who then can be saved? With man it is impossible, but with God, all things are possible. [\[Matthew 19:25-26, Mark 10:26-27, Luke 18:26-27\]](#)