

THE FOOLISHNESS OF GOD

1 Corinthians 1:25

Introduction: Ours is a world of power, intellect, atomic energy, incomprehensible, frightfully challenging power. Everywhere one looks there are all sorts of "advancements," changes, more comfortable living, health improvements, miraculous cures and longer lives. It seems that everywhere we look everything is improving, life is getting better. Is everything really getting better?

I. WHAT IS THE CHURCH LIKE IN THIS AGE OF GROWTH AND POWER?

1. The church is actually staggering. It is suffering from inadequacy and does not seem to have what it takes to confront this modern, changing world. It doesn't seem to be tapping its divine resources. It seems to be resorting to any means (gimmicks) available to get the world's attention.
2. The world displays power and bigness. The Church substitutes:
 - Quantity for quality
 - Men for the "MAN"
 - Organization for the Holy Spirit
 - "Degrees" for the grace of God.
 - Prestige for Spiritual power.
 - Smoke for the fires of God.
3. This age worships power. The Church needs, must, return to that eternal principle of "The Foolishness of God."
 - God's methods seem foolish to man, even ridiculous, yet they are wiser than men.
 - God's plans look inadequate, but are stronger than men's.
 - *1 Corinthians 1:18-27; 2:14; 3:19*
 - The selection of Gideon's army seemed foolish. (Manner of getting a drink of water).
 - How Israel was delivered from Egypt seemed foolish. (Trapped at the Red Sea).
 - The method of the capture of Jericho seemed foolish. (Marched around the walls).

II. THE CHURCH PREACHES CHRIST'S HUMBLENESS, BUT...

1. The Church, itself, is afraid to be as humble, as weak as Christ or to turn the other cheek.
 - The Church shies away from total identification with the Cross.
 - The Church can be strong with Christ, but how little of being weak with Him.
 - The Church is eager to seize the sword to defend the Master but then in the heat of battle to resort to the methods of its enemies. (An eye for an eye).
2. The Church feels it must prove its strength for Christ by meeting the battles it faces with the weapons of the world.
 - It just is not believed that it's God's plan for the LAMB to slay the Lion, that the DOVE outwits the Serpent.

3. All the while the Church pays lip service to the gospel principles (weakness overcomes might), that foolishness of the gospel overcomes worldly wisdom, that God prefers a weak, humble, puny man or woman to conquer mountains.

III. GOD'S WAY IS JUST NOT THE CHURCH'S WAY TODAY

1. God's way just doesn't fit today's pattern of logic and it can't be right for our clever, sophisticated age. "You've gotta be tough" in our modern times.
2. Peter waved a sword around, thought he was defending the Lord, he was bold at that time as Jesus was right there. Later Peter warmed his hands at the world's fire and there he was weak, afraid, helpless as Jesus wasn't there with him. After the Lord's resurrection Peter was imprisoned and that night the prison shook, his chains fell off, the doors flew open. It was the same weak Peter, but this time he had Christ and Christ freed him.
3. Rome was the strongest nation of the world but within 300 years declared that Christianity was the nation's official "religion."
 - How easily God defeats world powers and kingdoms.
 - In spite of prisons, kings, and powers, God's word grew and multiplied.
4. Look at the early Church. It was bankrupt, on it's knees, just a few weak, feeble Christians. Weak, but weak with Christ. 2,000 years have since passed and the Church is still here.

CONCLUSION:

1. Face it. The Church of today is very much like the world in many ways.
2. Does the Church need to be strengthened or weakened?
3. Does the Church need to be strengthened or stripped as Gideon's army?
4. Is the Church too mighty? Does it need sifting?
5. Does God need to purge His Church?
6. Does God need to remove those who are making the Church like the world?
7. A ship has to be put in dry dock every once in a while to have all the barnacles removed that have attached themselves to the outside of the ship, thus slowing it down.
 - The Church also gathers things that do not belong and thus does not, cannot do as it should.
8. Are the things of God really "foolish?" If not then why doesn't the Church return to those "foolish things of God?"