

“Salvation for Dummies”

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5

When they heard Paul speak about the resurrection of the dead, some laughed in contempt, but others said, “We want to hear more about this later.” That ended Paul’s discussion with them,

Acts 17:32-33 (NLT)

Then Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.

Acts 18:1 (NLT)

1. Go back to the basics.

The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God. As the Scriptures say,

*“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise
and discard the intelligence of the intelligent.”*

So where does this leave the philosophers, the scholars, and the world’s brilliant debaters? God has made the wisdom of this world look foolish. Since God in his wisdom saw to it that the world would never know him through human wisdom, he has used our foolish preaching to save those who believe.

1 Corinthians 1:18-21 (NLT)

2. Expect a mixed reaction

- **3 kinds of listeners- 3 different reactions.**

It is foolish to the Jews, who ask for signs from heaven. And it is foolish to the Greeks, who seek human wisdom. So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended and the Gentiles say it’s all nonsense.

But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God’s weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength.

1 Corinthians 1:22-25 (NLT)

- **4 kinds of soil- 4 different results.**

The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the Kingdom and don’t understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts. The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. But since they don’t have deep roots, they don’t last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God’s word. The seed that fell among the thorns represents those who hear God’s word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life and the lure of wealth, so no fruit is produced. The seed that fell on good soil represents those who truly hear and understand God’s word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!”

Matthew 13:19-23 (NLT)

3. God can use a dummy like me.

Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world’s eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important. As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.

God has united you with Christ Jesus. For our benefit God made him to be wisdom itself. Christ made us right with God; he made us pure and holy, and he freed us from sin. Therefore, as the Scriptures say, “If you want to boast, boast only about the Lord.”

1 Corinthians 1:26-31 (NLT)

4. Our life is just as important as our words.

When I first came to you, dear brothers and sisters, I didn’t use lofty words and impressive wisdom to tell you God’s secret plan. For I decided that while I was with you I would forget everything except Jesus Christ, the one who was crucified. I came to you in weakness - timid and trembling. And my message and my preaching were very plain. Rather than using clever and persuasive speeches, I relied only on the power of the Holy Spirit. I did this so you would trust not in human wisdom but in the power of God.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 (NLT)

SO WHAT?

Tell *your story* & answer *their questions*.

Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way.

1 Peter 3:15-16a (NLT)

Notes

Growth Group Questions

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

1. Who first shared their faith with you? How did they do it? How did you respond?
2. Do you respond more with your head, or with your heart? Why?
3. When it comes to sharing our faith, “our life is just as important as our words.” 1 Thessalonians 2:1-13 gives us a great picture of what sharing both looks like. Read the passage and answer the following questions.

What do you think Paul meant by sharing his life in verse 8?

What could it look like to share the Gospel and your life?

4. 1 Peter 3:18 sums up the good news in this, “For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.” When we share this simple yet profound truth we can expect a mixed reaction. We looked at the parable of the four soils this weekend. Go back and read Jesus’ story in Matthew 13:1-23.

Can you remember what kind of soil might have described your life when you first heard the good news? How about now?

If you could sow seeds into the life of anyone in your current circle of relationships and influence, who would you most like to see take a step closer to Jesus? What could you do or say that might help that happen?

5. One effective means of sharing the Gospel with others is the “Roman Road.” Whether you are a new Christian, a long-time Christian, or still trying to understand Christianity, these verses can help us understand our need for salvation and how a relationship with Christ begins. As you read each verse, jot down what essential truth each passage communicates about our relationship with Christ.

- Romans 1:19-20
- Romans 3:23
- Romans 6:23
- Romans 5:8
- Romans 10:9-11

Take a few minutes and talk to God. Thank Him for what He has done for you. Ask Him to help you understand how you might share the “Good News” with others.