

Just A Minute! *With Scripture*

The King James Bible is used for all references. Verses may be made bold or numbered for emphasis.

God's Wisdom and Power Stand Alone

Topic: I Corinthians 1

I Corinthians opens with a contrast between man's wisdom and power and God's. His all knowing and all powerful ways stand apart and far above man's. *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* (Isaiah 55:8-9)

Left to ourselves, we, just as the Corinthians, exalt what we think and can do, above God: *"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were they thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things."* (Rom. 1:21-23) Man's self-exaltation always seems to follow this Romans 1 process:

1. Knowing better, we do not glorify God and are not thankful.
2. We become vain (empty self-centeredness) in imaginations.
3. Our heart is then darkened, without the light of God's Truth.
4. Lifting up our own wisdom, we become fools. As we exalt our thinking/other things, we believe 'we' are worthy of glory, rather than giving the glory due our great God and Savior.

Wisdom: As Creator (*Gen. 1:1*), God is the only one that is to receive glory: *"That no flesh should glory in his presence...That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."* (I Cor. 1:29, 31) When man exalts himself, he becomes his own god, setting life rules and expectations. A few examples found today:

- Develops own belief system, apart from God's Word rightly divided (*II Tim. 2:15*), making a hodge-podge of acquired beliefs, which become a type of self-made religion in the mind.
- Believes that whatever he thinks, is the truth i.e. Born with a man's physical body, but feeling/determining he is a woman.
- Exalts an individual, race, gender, class, country over another, yet all are descendants of Adam, equal in God's sight.
- Redefines the 'institution of marriage' (man-women-*Gen. 2:22-25*) or 'when life begins' (the moment of conception-*Jer. 1:5*).
- Lives contrary to the Truth, as if there is no God or judgment: i.e. eat drink and be merry; for tomorrow we die (*I Cor. 15:32*).

Man's wisdom is considered foolishness unto God. What scholars, religions, or what we say, think, or feel are NOT to be exalted. We are to look to God's Word; Scripture is to be our ultimate authority.

Power: God's instructions or wisdom, written to us, enables His power to work within our inner man. Therefore we are to look to God and His Word, specifically Paul's epistles, Romans thru Philemon, for Truth to live by. We are NEVER to look to man or religion: *"That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."* (I Corinthians 2:5)

Any power that is NOT of God, leads back to the prince of this world (*II Cor 2:11*), allowing Satan to influence and even derail us, as before we trusted the blood of Christ for salvation: *"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* (*Eph. 2:2-3*) Thus, it is imperative to stay in the Word!

Consider: Are you self-aware to know if you follow your feelings/own thinking? Do you understand the Truth, believing/standing on verses? If you follow your feelings and thoughts, you will...

- Walk according to the course of this world and the prince of this world, Satan.
- Satan's ways/perspective will become yours.
- Walk as children of disobedience and children of wrath.
- Have a conversation (walk) that fulfills the lust of your flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and mind and CANNOT please God!

Reflect on the importance of reading the Word regularly, really listening to what the Holy Spirit is teaching you. Then, **slow your life down** to apply this in your life, so your mind will be renewed.



Search it out!

Choose Something to Study in This Section

I Corinthians 1: Using the Comparisons and Contrasts Study Tool

Examine verses!



God uses comparisons and contrasts to teach *I Corinthians* about man's ways versus God's. As you read this chapter, purpose to notice this study insight, as it's used thru Paul's epistles. This tool is found in "Exploring the Bible Using Study Tools," available to purchase on Amazon.

1. **Make comparison list:** a) Read the chapter to list man's wisdom/power, and then God's. b) Look at each list, side-by-side, to evaluate how they are different. Are they similar? This can help clarify the chapter.
2. **Look for Key Words:** Specific comparison-contrasting words may be used to make a point clear, such

as how one is 'wise' and another 'foolish.' Define them to gain a deeper understanding of the passages.

3. **Find clues:** Notice 'describing words' (adjectives) or 'action words' (verbs) when observing this study tool as they also provide pointers for understanding. Jot down what you find for man's wisdom, then God's.
4. **Read *I Corinthians 1:25-28*:** Evaluate this section and note any observations made. Did it clarify the section for you? Did you notice anything new?
5. **Study other passages:** Purpose to read at least two additional chapters in Paul's epistles to assess if any comparisons or contrasts are being made and evaluate them to find clarity i.e. *Rom. 5*, *Rom. 14*, *I Cor. 7*, or *I Cor. 14*.

**Newer students: Focus on 'reading' Scripture rather than on using many new study insights.*

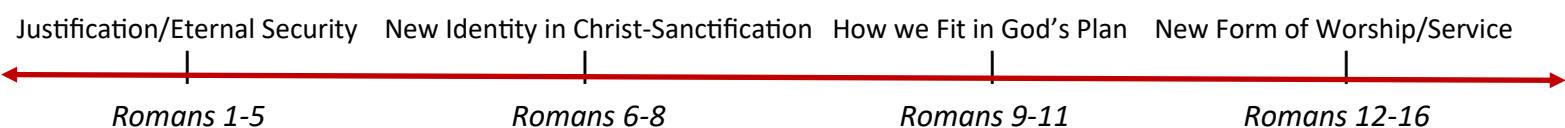
Discerning What Really Is!

As the writer to and the Apostle of the Gentiles, Paul was clearly able to pinpoint the spiritual state of the Corinthians. In order to help them mature, he knew where they were in their edification and how to help them. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (II Timothy 3:16-17) Someone can verbalize a lot of doctrine (head knowledge), but may have little 'functional doctrine' that they can apply. As ambassadors, it's important for us to discern where someone is in order to come to them where they are to teach them.

The saints at Corinth spent a year and a half with the Apostle Paul learning foundational Truths (*Acts 18:11*), which most wisely would have been the foundational contents of the book of Romans. They had familiarity with these basics, yet remained carnal babes (*I Cor. 3:1-4*). They would have been taught how to be just with God (*Rom. 1-5*), how to live a holy, sanctified life (*Rom. 6-8*), God's plan and purpose for both Israel and the Body of Christ (*Rom. 9-11*), and about their new form of worship & service to God (*Rom. 12-16*). The book of Corinthians provided them with needed feedback to address specific areas they rebelled against, didn't believe, or were not applying. The goal of Paul's epistles are found in the first chapter. This seems to be his goal: "God is faithful, by whom ye were **called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.**" (I Cor. 1:9) We can all benefit from this book.

As saints, we're all somewhere on the Spiritual Growth Continuum of Paul's epistles. As you become aware of where you are in your growth, you also will be able to focus your attention on specific doctrinal topics or books of Paul's epistles to fill the in the gaps of your own understanding or correct inaccurate views. It can also help you teach others. Notice the continuum of doctrines specifically taught in Romans. **To Do:** Can you evaluate where you are in your edification of the book of Romans?

SPIRITUAL GROWTH CONTINUUM OF ROMANS



1 Corinthians 1:24: Christ The Power And Wisdom of God

By Deborah Garner

1 Corinthians 1 is chalk full of truths that are life changing. Just read it. It sets our world aright. Talk about strength; God's WEAKEST moment is stronger than the strength of ALL men of all time collectively! (*1 Cor. 1:25*). So, when God chooses to use the weak things of this world to confound the wise (*1 Cor. 1:27*), we shouldn't be surprised that He can and will use us. God used David in the battle against Goliath to free a nation, the battle of Jericho was won with a little exercise and praise, and Jesus' death on the cross to purchase our salvation. God is using His tender love to win the world over to Himself. Is there anyone or anything God won't use? Is there anything God can't handle? He's on our side!



AND, according to *1 Corinthians 1:25*, God's foolishness is WISER than the collective wisdom of ALL men of all time! If this is true, why can't we trust God? When we sense God prompting us to do something that looks foolish, remember David's stone killed Goliath, the sea parted for the children of God with a stick, Jesus raised the dead with his voice, and Phillip was translated after doing Bible study with the Ethiopian eunuch. God, who is ALL powerful, uses the prayers within the inner man of His children to manifest His Truth. Through "...the preaching of the cross..." (*1 Cor. 1:18*), many can believe and accept Christ in one sermon. And so, when *1 Corinthians 1:27* says, "...God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise...", I feel compelled to believe.

Well, *1 Corinthians 1:25-31* just reminds us of how powerful and wise our God is. I'm sticking with HIM, aren't you? *Romans 8:38-39* says, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor thing to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Why Would Anyone Want to Stay Carnal?

What a great question to ponder as many saints stay in a carnal state, but why? There are numerous reasons. It may help to understand at least some of them so that you can help yourself or others when it occurs. We all know that we get caught in carnality at times. A few possibilities: it's a habit/comfortable, the flesh enjoys it, everyone does it, it's hard to change, I'm fearful, I'm not a goodie, goodie, I'm forgiven...why not enjoy life, I'm too old...I can't change, I was never taught about it, etc. Any sound familiar?

The Corinthians were no different and stuck in carnality, as Paul relays: "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" (*1 Cor. 3:3*) *1 Corinthians* is 'reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness' (*1 Tim. 3:16*), so that they could learn to yield unto God and understand their relationship and impact on the Body, manifesting godliness. This verse

seems to be the organizational structure of *1 Corinthians*: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (*1 Cor. 1:10*)

What can we learn from the carnality in others? If we are honest, we all have the same flesh. Thus, given the right circumstances, we can have similar challenges with the flesh. Even after we are justified and saved, our flesh is weak and falls short of God's glory (*Romans 3:23*). Thus, we can determine to understand and love those caught in carnality. Instead of judging, speak the truth in love. "Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved." (saved from the power of sin in their life-*1 Cor. 10:33*). We can take them under our wing, if they desire it, to assist them to learn/mature. Sometimes one's journey is not a quick road to change. Are we willing to love them through it as did Paul? "But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children." (*1 Thessalonians 2:7*) Sometimes loving others to the Truth is just holding forth the Word and being patient.

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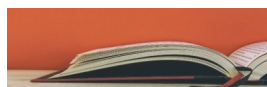
“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...” (Romans 3:24)

Foolish For His Glory by Jeanette Scallan

The world we live in is obsessed with status. Those who are wealthy, powerful, intelligent, articulate, or attractive are given the best seats at the table of life. Those who fall short are often made to feel rejected. They are left scrambling to compete for even a scrap of validation. Makeovers, dieting, social media, and self-promoting behaviors simply reflect a desperate search for acceptance. Sadly, even in most churches it is only the privileged few who may occupy positions of prominence. After all, you must look good in front of the cameras.

Does God feel this way? While forming the Body of Christ to be His ambassadors, did He choose the “best of the best” to represent His plan of salvation? *“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.” (1 Corinthians 1:27-29).* God places His priceless treasure in weak earthen vessels, and proclaims His wisdom through the foolishness of preaching.

If you find yourself feeling foolish, weak, base, despised, or rejected as a nobody; remember that these weaknesses are turned to strength in Christ our Lord. In His wisdom, God has chosen to display His redeeming power in a paradox that confounds the wisdom of the world. We are dead, yet He makes us alive. We are weak, yet He makes us strong. We can glory in our infirmities, because it is the excellency of His power that makes us more than conquerors through Christ. We are foolish for His Glory.



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