

# True Relationship

Long Beach Alliance Church • October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**Because the foolishness of God is  
wiser than men, and the weakness of  
God is stronger than men.  
~ 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:25 (NASB)**

## **1) Seeking Faith Without Trust**

**A) Contrasting those who have been saved (“those who believe,” 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:21) against both the Jews and Greeks (1:22), Paul gets specific about the impact of the “word of the cross” (1:18).**

**B) The Jews, who had access to the wisdom of God’s Word, sought signs to “locate their situation within the promises of salvation history”.<sup>\*</sup>**

**C) The Greeks/Gentiles (1:22-23) sought mastery in every area of life. They sought to locate themselves within this world through wisdom.**

<sup>\*</sup> There is a great deal of eschatological nuancing within this passage, although the themes are not so pronounced as to dominate the context. The notions of this passage reflect the Jewish apocalyptic understanding of time, divided (in the Jewish mind) between this age and the one to come. Clearly borrowed from Jewish apocalypticism is the expectation of “signs” or “demonstrations of power” or “miracles” (σημεία) with which the authentic manifestation of God’s power, the message of the cross, stands in stark contrast. Jewish expectations of the age to come are for a reversal of the present order of things. From the perspective that is his, Paul introduces the theme of eschatological reversal into the letter by means of a Scriptural quotation (Isaiah 29:14 from 1:19), which Paul has expounded upon so that it speaks even more powerfully of the destruction of human wisdom and cleverness. Summarized from *First Corinthians, Sacra Pagina Commentary Series*, Raymond E. Collins, Pgs. 92-93 & *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Greek Commentary Series, Anthony C. Thiselton, Pgs 169-170.

**D) All of mankind (both Jew & Gentile) attempt to find a sense of meaning in the world, but the essential message of the Gospel (Christ crucified) seems to be a ridiculous route for salvation (1:23).**

**2) The Power & Wisdom Of God Revealed!**

**A) "But" -- Paul interjects -- "to the called ones..." (1:24). The cross of Christ is THE turning point for mankind! All is changed because of the cross of Christ! It is the "foolish" calling card of God!**

**B) "Christ crucified" (1:23) is both the "power & wisdom of God" (1:24) because it actually works!**

**C) For all of mankind's methods, plans, wisdom, miracles (of science, medicine, etc.), financial acumen... NOTHING works in solving the human dilemma of sin and separation from God.**

**D) ONLY Jesus Christ, crucified for our sins, a suffering Savior, a sacrificial offering on behalf of His "called ones," is the TRUE power and wisdom which God Himself has revealed (1:25).**

**E) God shows Himself as "stronger than men" and "wiser than men" (1:25) through means (Christ crucified) which appear "foolish" (moronic).**

**F) The offer of "true relationship" (1:9, communion) with God, comes not in God being "smarter" or "stronger" (differences in degree) but in God being "other" (differences in kind). The cross no longer kills, but provides NEW LIFE for all who believe and trust in God's anointed, Jesus Christ!**