

# (1 Corinthians) Fool's for Christ's Sake

by Brian Brodersen

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*Brian Brodersen's sermon emphasizes the value of being a 'fool for Christ' by prioritizing God's perspective over worldly judgments and pressures.*

**Duration:** 46:17

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 4:1

**Topics:** "Humility In Ministry", "Following Christ"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of pride and the exaltation of human wisdom in the Corinthian church. Some leaders in the church had started looking down on Paul, considering him uncultured and inferior. The speaker uses the example of seven young men in Britain who gave up their privileged lives to become missionaries in China, India, and Africa, to illustrate the concept of being fools for Christ. The world will never fully accept those who follow Jesus, but it is the most sensible thing to do because everyone will stand before Christ one day. The speaker concludes by urging the Corinthians to imitate Paul and follow his example.

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## Transcript

Let me read to you chapter 4 of 1st Corinthians. Let a man so consider us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I don't even judge myself. For I know nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this.

But he who judges me is the Lord. Therefore, judge nothing before the time until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the heart. Then each one's praise will come from God.

Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sake that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other. For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? You are already rich. You are full.

You have reigned as kings without us, and indeed I could wish you did reign that we also might reign with you. For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last as men condemned to death. For we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.

We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are distinguished, but we are dishonored.

To the present hour, we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed and beaten and homeless, and we labor working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless. Being persecuted, we endure.

Being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as a filth of the world and the offscouring of all things until now. I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children, I warn you.

For though you might have 10,000 instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore, I urge you, imitate me.

For this reason, I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ as I teach everywhere in every church. Now some are puffed up as though I were not coming to you, but I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills, and will know not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod or in love and a spirit of gentleness? As you remember, this fourth chapter brings to a close the lengthy rebuke that began back in verse 10 of chapter one. Some of the leaders in the Corinthian church had been carried away with love for human wisdom, which led to pride and the exalting of one man over another. Having come under the influence of philosophy, they began to look down on Paul as someone who was uncultured, lacking in eloquence and now somewhat inferior to them.

To put it simply, with this new philosophical twist on things, they felt that they were now above their teacher and no longer needing his influence. After showing them the fallacies of their reasoning, he says to them in chapter three, verse 18, Let no one deceive himself. If anyone seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise.

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. He then reminds them that he is God's servant and therefore not to be judged by them. Also, that whatever they have has been given to them by the Lord and it is not to be boasted in.

Finally, he reminds them that he has begotten them in the faith and urges them to imitate him. Now today, we want to look specifically at Paul's statement found in verse 10 of this fourth chapter. And the statement is this, that we are fools for Christ's sake.

We are fools for Christ's sake. The first thing I want you to notice, that to be a fool for Christ's sake is a desirable status. Because Paul says we are fools for Christ's sake.

He's contrasting himself and the other apostles with some of the leaders and some of the other believers in Corinth. So we see that to be a fool for Christ's sake is something that is desirable. To be a fool for Christ's sake puts you in the company of the apostles.

I think of the apostle Paul and as you follow his life and his ministry as revealed through the book of the Acts of the Apostles, you find that on several occasions he was considered by people that he had encountered as being quite foolish. When Paul arrived in Athens and he began to preach the gospel there, he came upon certain Stoic and Epicurean philosophers. And as they listened to Paul's proclamation, they said, what does this babbler have to say? They considered his message to be just babbling.

They considered it to be a somewhat foolish message, in other words, compared to their sophisticated philosophies. Think of Paul as he stood before King Agrippa, recorded later on in the Acts of the Apostles. He's there before King Agrippa and he's presenting his case for Christianity.

And he's appealing to Agrippa by the fact that Agrippa was quite familiar with Jewish customs as well as the life in the ministry of Jesus. And he even brings King Agrippa to the point of expressing interest in the gospel. Agrippa actually says to Paul at one point, he says, Paul, you've almost persuaded me to become a Christian.

But yet in the middle of Paul's declaration to Agrippa, Festus, who was another Roman official, who was participating in this sort of a trial that Paul was experiencing there. He was being tried to some degree. But suddenly Festus, he interrupts and he cries out, he says, Paul, you are beside yourself.

He said, much learning is driving you mad. So to Festus, this message seemed to be a message of madness. And so we see with the apostles that they were quite frequently considered to be fools for Christ.

And yet Paul says to the Corinthians, imitate me. So this is a desirable position to be in, to be in the position of being a fool for Christ. But we need to be clear about what it is to be a fool for Christ.

Being a fool for Christ is not the equivalent of idiocy. It is not the equivalent of idiocy. And we need to really understand that because many people have gone out and acted idiotically.

And then been branded as fools and then accepted it as persecution in the name of Jesus. But if we are being idiotic, we're not necessarily being fools for Christ. We might be being utterly foolish in Christ's name, but it's not the equivalent necessarily of being a fool for Christ.

Recently, the city of York has passed an ordinance against preaching and the distributing of gospel literature. So you do not have the liberty any longer in this city of York to stand up and to publicly proclaim the gospel, nor to go about handing out literature. Now, the first response to that from Christians is generally, oh, look at their beginning to persecute us.

And they're acting hostile toward the gospel. And maybe there is some of that involved. But if you know a little bit about the history behind the passing of this ordinance, I think that this ordinance has come about as a result of foolishness on the part of certain Christians who were thinking that they were being fools for Christ.

But in actuality, they were being idiotic. You see, to be a fool for Christ does not mean that we go out and confront people in a belligerent manner. And, you know, perhaps you've heard something about up in the north, some of the people who are involved in street preaching and all.

Perhaps you've heard about the so-called persecution they're experiencing. But yet, I can't help but feel that in many cases they're bringing this upon themselves because they're acting in an idiotic manner

rather than in a godly manner. Actually, I was talking to a friend of mine who pastors a church and I asked him specifically about these people.

And I and I asked him, I said, are they being put in jail for preaching the gospel? And his response to me was this. He said, if they were, then I would be in jail with them. And I know this man, I know his testimony.

He's he's preached boldly in that region for over 20 years. But he proceeded to tell me that what they're doing is going out and behaving very belligerently. And they're accosting people and they're being very aggressive.

And you see, this isn't the kind of thing that the apostle was referring to. When they went into the various cultures they went into. They they sought to to some degree to adapt to the cultural setting and then to share the gospel within that context.

Now, on the same subject for a moment of street preaching and things like that, open air preaching, I'm not at all saying that that is wrong. As a matter of fact, I think it can certainly be right if you're called to do it. But that's the whole point.

You need to be called to do it. And if you're called to do it, you're going to do it in a fashion where you're not going to be offensive. Now, there's a difference in offending people through your message versus offending people through the method that you use in presenting your message.

You see, if people are going to be offended, we need to make sure that the gospel itself is what offends them, not our presentation of it. And so often that's what happens. A person is being offensive, not because of the message or proclaiming, but the method by which they are proclaiming it.

Now, going back to this thing of open air preaching for a moment. There was a time in the history of this country where open air preaching was something that was very acceptable. It was very culturally relevant.

It was something that you just expected people to do. And at that time, it had a tremendous impact back in the days of Wesley and in the days of Whitfield and people like that. They would go out into the commons in different places and they would just stand up and begin to preach and thousands of people would flock to them.

And it was something that was very typical at that time. You would find that going on. But today, things have changed considerably.

And people are still doing it. And I think sometimes they're doing it simply because that was the method that was used in the past and not realizing that maybe this isn't the method that God would like to use today. You know, God does change his methods.

His message never changes, but he does change his methods in dealing with people. So today, and I'm generalizing here, but I think generally this is true today. If you go out onto a street corner and you take a megaphone and you stand up and you begin to preach, most people think you are an idiot.

They don't find anything attractive in that. They don't find anything convicting about that. They don't feel compelled to come and give their life to Jesus.

They actually, I think in many cases, feel repelled. They want to go the other way. They want to skirt around you and make sure they don't get close to you at all.

And I think that in some sense, people are failing to see the difference between being a fool for Christ and idiocy and bringing to a certain degree reproach on the name of Jesus. It's a very delicate thing and we need to be careful about it. And as I said, I'm not giving a total condemnation to anyone who does open air preaching.

And again, as I said, there are times when that can be proper, but we must do it not because that's something that's been done in the past. We must do it because that's something that God is saying to do now. And the evidence that God is leading us to do it is that there's going to be an element of fruit from it.

I think in whatever God calls us to do, part of the verification that God has called us is that there will be fruitfulness coming forth from it. There will be a response. So we want to be careful not to mistake these two things, being a fool for Christ.

And then on the other hand, being idiotic because we certainly don't want to be idiotic. There are enough things to drive people away from the Lord. We don't want to be contributing to that.

That's Christian people. We want to be doing all that we can to help people pass those stumbling blocks and to listen to the gospel message. So the question then is, what does it mean to be a fool for Christ? And can I actually be a fool for Christ without going out publicly and appearing to be idiotic? The answer is absolutely, because as I said, I don't think that really has anything to do with it at all.

What does it mean to be a fool for Christ? Well, first of all, it means this. It means to be more concerned about what God thinks than what man thinks. That's it, first of all.

It means to be more concerned about what God thinks than about what man thinks. And this is always the issue that tempts us to compromise. We're tempted so often to compromise our convictions because what will other people think? What will they think if they see me carrying my Bible around? They'll think I'm a religious nut.

And so we were tempted to refrain from doing that. Or what are people going to think if I suddenly open my mouth and interject at this point that what they're saying is incorrect based on what the Bible says? So you see, to be a fool for Christ means, first of all, that we're more concerned about what God thinks than what man thinks. There are some examples in Scripture that I think we could point to.

King David is a great example. Although he lived before the time of Jesus, he was certainly a Christian in the sense that he believed in the Messiah. He was a worshiper of the true God.

Perhaps you remember the story there in 2 Samuel where David was bringing the Ark of the Covenant up to Jerusalem. David had been transporting the Ark and there was an event that took place that caused David to rethink things. And the Ark temporarily went into the house of a man named Obed-Edom.

David got word that God was blessing the house of Obed-Edom because of the presence of the Ark. So he decided, OK, I'm going to bring the Ark up to Jerusalem. So he went and following the biblical instructions, he took the Ark and they began to proceed toward Jerusalem.

And it was a joyous occasion. And David, as he was going along, he just was liberated in worship. And as he was going up to Jerusalem, following the Ark, he was just free in his worship of the Lord.

And he was actually dancing through the streets, rejoicing in God, his Savior, rejoicing in the fact that the Ark was coming to Jerusalem. And in his rejoicing, he was he was self-abandoned. He wasn't self-conscious.

He wasn't thinking about, oh, no, what are the people going to think of me? I'm the king. And he wasn't worried about his dignity before the people. He was there just to express himself before God.

Now, his wife. Peered. Out from.

The house and she saw David. Dancing through the streets and it says that she despised him. She looked at him and she thought, oh, how.

How pathetic. Look at the king. Look what he's doing out there, dancing around like a child.

Oh, she just thought that this was so pathetic, so unsophisticated. So as David comes in, she says to him, oh, didn't the king look marvelous today as he was dancing through the streets? And no doubt she said it with quite a sarcastic tone. And David responded to her.

He said, I was worshiping God. I was praising God. I was dancing before the Lord.

And he said, and I will even be more undignified than that. And I will humble myself even more so before God. You see, David there expressed the idea behind Paul's statement.

He expressed it. In that, he said, I will be even more undignified. In other words, David was more concerned about what people what the Lord thought about him than what people thought about him.

So we see a great example there in David. We also see a good example of it in Mary. We have the record in the New Testament, John chapter 12.

We have the record of Mary taking this very costly ointment. And you remember, she broke the bottle and she poured this costly ointment upon Jesus. And as she was there, just in adoration of the Lord Jesus, just prior to his going to the cross, she was there just personally worshiping him.

Suddenly, Judas burst in. He says, oh, what what waste is this? How foolish to take this costly ointment and to waste it in such a fashion it could have been sold and given to the poor. And John reminds us that Judas really didn't care about the poor.

He was a thief and he was hoping that could be sold and the money could be put in the bag so he could take a bit of it. But you see, the attitude of Judas was what a waste. As Mary was worshiping, Judas thought, what a waste.

But Jesus said, leave her alone, for she has done this in preparation for my burial. You see, Mary again demonstrated this principle. She was more concerned with what God thought than what people thought.

She didn't care what Judas thought. She was concerned to express her love to Jesus. And that is what it means to be a fool for Christ.

It means to be more concerned about what God thinks than what man thinks. It means to stand for Christ when it would be temporarily to your advantage not to. And let's be honest, there are times when it would be temporarily to our advantage not to stand for Christ.

But to be a fool for Christ means I'm going to stand. Maybe you're looking for promotion on the job. And yet, you know that to stand for Christ at a certain point could jeopardize that promotion.

But a fool for Christ says, I'm going to leave the promotion in the hands of God. I'm not going to concern myself with that. I'm going to let God promote me if he wants to.

I'm going to stand for him. I see some people say, oh, that you don't want to do that now. I know you're a Christian and I know you're a religious person.

You just need to keep that to yourself. And, you know, we don't we don't want to be too outspoken with that. And there's this pressure.

To compromise our convictions, and you see, that's what happened with these people that Paul is writing to. Because listen to what he says to them, he contrasts himself and the other apostles with them. First of all, look what he says about himself and the other apostles.

He says, we are fools, we are weak and we are dishonored. That was the perception of the world toward the apostles. Look at the perception of the world toward the Corinthians.

You are wise. You are strong. You are distinguished.

You see, these were people who were Christians, but they didn't want their Christianity to interfere with their everyday life. That was a problem. They didn't want their Christianity to interrupt the normal procedure.

And so whenever there was a threat of that happening, they would compromise their convictions. And they would seek to please men rather than to please God. And so that's one aspect of what it means to be a fool for Christ.

Secondly, it means to be willing to turn your back on the world. Willing to turn your back on the world. Listen to verses.

Eleven and twelve to the present hour, we both hunger and thirst and we are poorly clothed and beaten and homeless. This is the life of an apostle. You see what the apostle is saying? We've turned our back on the world.

Verse twelve. We labor, working with our own hands, being reviled. We bless being persecuted.

We endure. Verse 13, being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world and the offscouring of all things until now.

They were willing to turn their back on the world and not to be influenced by what society in general might say about them. In 1885, many people in Britain of all ranks of society were startled by the news that seven young men of high social standing, some already famous through their athletic achievements, were giving up everything to go to China as missionaries. The men were Stanley Smith, a former stroke of the Cambridge vote, Montague Boshaw, a baronet son, D.E. Host, a gunner subaltern and son of a major general, W.W. Cassells, who like Smith went from Repton to Cambridge and was now a Church of England parson.

Cecil Polhill Turner, an old Etonian and an officer in the Queens Bay, his brother Arthur Polhill Turner, and lastly, C.T. Studd, acknowledged as the most brilliant cricketer of his day and possessing all that wealth could offer. These were the men who have gone down in history as the Cambridge seven. These men came under the influence of the gospel through the ministry of D.L. Moody.

God used him in a powerful way, brought many conversions. And these seven men who had the world at their fingertips, forsook it all and went to live their lives on the mission field, went to live in China, India, Africa, different places and spent their entire lives there ministering the gospel of Jesus Christ. But you see, my point is this.

So many people thought that that was so foolish for them to do such a thing. I mean, these weren't people that were, you know, the outcast of society who were looking for some sort of purpose in life, and this gave them meaning. But no, these were people that had it all.

And many people could not understand how these seven young men who had such potential for greatness in a worldly sense could leave it all behind, leave the family fortune behind and go out to serve Christ. But you see, these men demonstrate this principle of being fools for Christ. They were willing to turn their back on the world completely.

And there are, of course, multitudes of others who have done things just like this. The third thing that's implied in being a fool for Christ is to be dead to the self-life, to be dead to the self-life. I think of a man like Jim Elliott, another young man a little bit later, who gave his life and service to Jesus Christ.

Jim Elliott has gone down in history as a martyr for the faith. At a young age, he was massacred in his attempt to bring the gospel to the Alca Indians in Ecuador. But listen to a few of his statements, writing in his journal.

And here we see that expression coming through so strongly of his heart and his desire to be a fool for Christ. He said, I seek not a long life, but a full one like you, Lord Jesus. His diary also records his prayer to God that he might send him to South America and that he might bring the gospel to these people that had never heard it.

And that if need be, he might give his life in service for Jesus Christ, that he might die for his faith. This young man, this man who had all of the potential, a man who graduated with honors from the university, a man who was offered a position in one of the universities as a teacher, a man who was a great athletic champion, a man who just had so much going for him from the human perspective, would express his desire prior to going to give his life entirely for Christ. And as he would express this in letters to some of his friends, people would become concerned.

And as he was writing to one friend and expressing his heart's desire to go and to take the gospel to these people that had never heard it, and if need be, to give his life, one of his friends wrote back in response and said to him, Jim, you're being foolish. You're young, you're talented, you're gifted, you have the world before you. Oh, Jim, you could do so much for Jesus Christ by just staying right here among your own people.

Jim, you could be killed. Get rid of this foolish notion. And listen to the response of Jim Elliott.

He said this. He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. You see, his friend said, Jim, you're being foolish.

He said, no, I'm not being foolish. He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. Actually, to be a fool for Christ is the most sensible thing that anyone could do.

See, that's why Paul says we are fools for Christ. And then he says later, imitate me. This is the way ought to be.

And I think that one of the problems that we have today in the modern church scene is that so few are willing to be fools for Christ. Like the Corinthians, we want to be wise in Christ. I don't want anyone to think I'm a fool.

I like myself too much for that. I want people to think better of me than that. Don't we all have that kind of pressure at times? Times when maybe we're in the presence of some person who has a reputation, maybe it's some profound intellectual or something like that.

And suddenly we feel intimidated and we think, oh, I wish I would have studied a little more philosophy. Oh, why didn't I pay attention during that one course? I'd like to be able to say something profound right now. You know, and then some just some simple verses running through our minds.

Oh, that's too simple. They'll laugh at me. They'll think I'm foolish.

We all know those kinds of temptations. They come our way. But you see, the apostle was willing and ready to be a fool for Christ.

Jim Elliot was willing and ready to be a fool for Christ. And as I said, to be a fool for Christ is really the most sensible thing that anyone can do for two reasons. Number one, everyone is a fool for something.

Isn't this reality as we look around us? Everyone's a fool for something. I wonder how many people made a fool of themselves last night under the influence of alcohol. I would be willing to bet that thousands upon thousands of people in this city did that.

Made an absolute fool of themselves. Said things that they would have never said unless they were under the influence of alcohol. Done things that they would have never done unless they were under the influence of alcohol.

And not only last night did they do that, but they did it the previous week as well. And the previous week. And it's something that they're regularly doing.

There are many people that are a fool for drink. What about sport? What about the foolish things people do in support of their team? And you see people acting utterly foolish and childish so often. Painting their faces and dressing in a certain manner.

Parading up and down the streets and these kinds of things. And it's really all quite foolish, but yet the world looks on and says, Oh, aren't they devout fans? Aren't they loyal? Look at that, isn't that wonderful? But let someone speak up for Jesus. Let someone wear a shirt that maybe says Jesus on it or has a scripture on it or something like that.

Oh, what are you doing that for? Aren't you getting a bit carried away? But you see, to be a fool for Christ is the most sensible thing that anyone can be. Because your favorite football team or rugby team are going to pass. Your night at the pub is going to come to an end.

But we can go further. Think of the foolish things that people do for money. I can think of foolish things I've done for money.

You know, you've bet somebody. When I was younger and used to do things that most non-Christian people do, you know, we would do stupid things. We would go fishing and we'd catch a fish.

And then someone would say, I'll give you a dollar if you bite that fish's head off. And you know, what a foolish thing to do, to take a live fish and bite its head off. But for that dollar, I was going to do it.

I wasn't going to let that pass me by. You know, the things that we do for money, the foolish things, and that's relatively minor, I would imagine, compared to what some people do for money. But think of the things that people do for fame.

Just to get some recognition how foolish they're willing to behave. You see, we could go on and on talking about the foolish things that people do and the fact that everybody, to some degree, plays the fool in some area. But to be a fool for Christ is the most sensible thing that anyone can do for this reason.

Let me quote to you from Colossians chapter 1. For by Him, Jesus Christ, all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created through Him and for Him, and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. You see, to be a fool for Christ is the most sensible thing that anyone could do because all of life is winding down to an encounter with Jesus Christ. All of history is winding down to an encounter with Jesus Christ.

Every single person that's ever lived will one day arrive before the presence of Jesus Christ to give an answer for their life. And you know, when we leave this world and when we stand before God, the only question that will be presented to us is, What have you done with my son, Jesus Christ? That will be the question that God asks every person. God is not going to ask any other questions.

All the things that we think are important, all the things that we put up as a priority, all the things that we strive and labor for, those things do not matter before the judgment seat. God is not going to ask you how famous you were. He's not going to ask you how much money you made.

He's not going to ask you how capable you were, how many people loved you. None of those things are going to come up at that day. The only question that's going to be asked is, What did you do with my son, Jesus Christ? Were you ashamed of my son? You remember Jesus talked about that day.

And he said, if we're ashamed of him in this world before men, then he will be ashamed of us in the next world before his father and the holy angels. The thing that we all must keep in mind always is that every man is going to stand before God. Through the prophets, God asked the people of Israel the question, Why are you concerned about a man whose breath is in his nostrils? That's a King James translation.

But it's a great question. Why are we so concerned about what other people think about us? People that don't even know us. Why do we bother ourselves with that? We have to keep in mind that Jesus is the one that I'm going to stand before someday.

I honestly came to a point in my life where, by the grace of God, I realized that. Because I was living an ungodly life. I spent most of my time seeking to please my friends.

And through seeking to please my friends, I had to continue to live in ungodliness because that's what they did. That's what we did. And that's what was acceptable.

And yet I knew in my own heart, by the conviction of the spirit, that the way I was living was wrong. I knew that I needed to follow Jesus. And so finally, one day I came to the conclusion that I was going to do that.

I was going to make that step to follow him. And I made that step. And as I took that step toward Jesus, some friends confronted me and they said, What are you doing? You can't do that.

What about us? Where are you going? And I said, You know what? We're all going to hell. But I don't want to go to hell. You can go to hell if you want to.

That's your business. But I'm not. I'm going to follow Jesus.

Now, they thought that was foolish. They thought that was utterly ridiculous. But yet I remember seeing some of those same people as the years passed by.

And as they could see my life and the blessing that I was experiencing being a Christian, and they could look at their own lives. Some of them had died. Drugs.

Some of them were in prison. And I remember maybe ten years after I'd become a Christian, looking back on those people that I once lived to please and thinking about the tragedy in their own life because of what sin had done. And then thanking God for saving me and giving me the grace and the strength to be able to walk away from it.

But you see, the world is always going to think us foolish. We're never going to please everyone. And Paul's point is that we need to be willing to be fools for Christ.

If that's what the world will think of us, then so be it. Jesus said, If they loved me, they'll love you. If they hated me, they'll hate you.

And I think one of the problems, again, with the modern church is the church wants to be accepted by the world. We can't stand the thought of the world not accepting us, not agreeing with us. And so what we do is we compromise our position.

Individually, personally, we compromise our position. As a church, in a larger sense, we compromise the scriptures and doctrine and things like that because we think, oh, well, you know, people will accept us if they if they feel that we're like them. We don't want to be seen to be out of touch.

Oh, we're coming upon the 21st century. We've got to we've got to bring the Bible up to date, those kinds of pressures. But we have to refuse to do that.

And if it causes the world to look at me and say, what a fool, then I must be content to rest with that. But knowing that as I rest in that, that I take my place alongside the apostles and prophets and the great men and women who have served God throughout the ages. See, we have to get this embedded into our minds.

The world is at enmity with God. And if you follow Jesus, the world will never accept you fully and completely. Are you willing? Are you willing to have that? Remember, it is really the most sensible thing you can do, because everyone in the world is going to answer before Christ one day.

We're all going to stand there. And I often think of this. We're all going to stand alone.

I'm not going to have my friends there. Those people who put pressure on me to not follow Jesus, those ones that I was trying to please, they're not going to be with me when I stand before God. Nor am I going to be with them.

They're going to be alone as well. So in closing, Paul's words to the Corinthians are quite applicable to us. Imitate me, says the apostle.

Imitate me. Follow my example. And that example is the one that we've seen.

Paul was dead to the self-life. He was willing to turn his back on the world. And he thought more of what God thought of him than what men thought of him.

And that is the place that all of us need to be. We need to imitate him in that. And it's only as we are fools for Christ that we can expect to experience the full blessing and power of Christ in our lives.

And it's only if we are willing to be fools for Christ that we can ultimately impact other people. There are people who are really honestly looking for something different. You know, rebellion has always been fairly popular, especially in the last 30 years or so.

And we've seen various fads that have come and gone where there's a demonstration, a visible demonstration of rebellion. Maybe it's the way you dress. Maybe it's the way you do your hair.

Maybe it's the kind of music you listen to or something like that. And you know, there's this desire to be different. And we think of the countercultures and all of those kinds of things.

But you know, in reality, the only true counterculture is Christianity. Because everything else is going in the same direction. It's all following the flow under the devil's orchestration.

And I've often said to young people, if you want to be a real rebel, follow Jesus Christ. That's true rebellion. And anything other than that is not rebellion at all.

It's conformity. You're simply conforming to another aspect of the world's philosophy. It might not be conformity to the traditional aspect, so fine.

But you're still conforming. The true nonconformist is the one who follows Christ. And so that's the challenge that we have before us.

To follow Christ, even when it will mean that people will think that we are foolish. But what do I care about what someone else thinks, who's going to die themselves and stand in the presence of God and give an account for their own life? Why should that affect me? Why should that bother me? I have these examples of these great men. The apostles, the prophets, the Cambridge Seven, Jim Elliot, and millions of others who have given up everything for Christ, but yet in the end realized, I've given up nothing.

And as Jim said, he is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. Let's be fools for Christ. It's the wisest thing we could do.

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