

Psalm 32:9

by William MacDonald

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking guidance from God, waiting on the Lord, and being led by the peace of God in making decisions.

Duration: 41:32

Scripture: Ephesians 6:5

Topics: "Led By God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares two powerful stories to emphasize the importance of controlling one's temper and using words wisely. The first story involves the famous atheist Ingersoll challenging God to strike him dead in five minutes, only to prove that no God exists. However, a Christian in the audience calmly points out that losing one's temper diminishes their testimony. The second story involves a group of Christian young people traveling together, with one member expressing doubts about the Word of God. Another quiet individual in the group responds with a verse from Proverbs, reminding the doubter to avoid listening to teachings that lead them astray. The speaker concludes by highlighting the significance of speaking the right words at the right time, as it can be a gift from God to bring comfort, encouragement, warning, or even rebuke.

Transcript

Psalm 32 and verse 9. It says, Be ye not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee. Or, probably if you have another version of the Bible, it'll say, whose trappings must be bit and bridle to hold them in, else they will not come near unto thee. But that really isn't too important.

What we want to think about in this verse is the admonition that we should not be as the horse or the mule. And I would suggest to you that the horse and the mule bring before us two different, two wrong attitudes in connection with the guidance of God. That's quite a study in contrast, isn't it? The horse and the mule.

When I read this verse about the horse, I don't think of an old nag in the barnyard, but I think of a high-spirited horse who's always wanting to move forward, always champing at the bit, you know, restless and wanting to be on the move. And of course the mule is the very opposite. The mule is obstinate and stubborn and willful and no matter what you do, you can't get him to move forward.

And this verse of scripture tells us that both of them have to be controlled by bit and bridle. Well, it says don't be like that. And some Christians are like that.

You know, there are some Christians that they find it very hard to wait on the guidance of God. They all want to be, always want to be pushing forward, always want to be moving forward and doing it in their own strength. And then there are other Christians who are like the mule and they're always lagging behind.

The Lord is guiding them, but they're holding back. And the verse says, be not as the horse or the mule, which have no understanding. When I think of the subject of guidance, I think of a few rules of thumb that have been a help to me in discerning the guidance of God.

And I'd like to share them with you this afternoon. How do you, how do you act in connection with the guidance of God? Well, sometimes guidance is very clear. Sometimes it's very unclear.

I've had some very spectacular instances of guidance in my life, but there are other dry spells when the heaven seemed to be brass and I would cry out to the Lord for guidance and it seemed that nothing happened. So one of the rules that I follow is this. I ask God to confirm the guidance in the mouths of two or three witnesses, because it says in Matthew 18, 16, that in the mouths of two or three witnesses, everything shall be established.

As far as the Bible is concerned, confident testimony is found in the witness of two or three. So I come before the Lord as a very simple believer. And I say something like this, Lord, you know how dumb I am.

And if you only give me one evidence of your guidance, I might miss it. So I'm asking you on the authority of your own word to give two or three evidences of your guidance. Do you know he does it? God accommodates himself to our weaknesses.

You say, how does he do it? Well, he does it sometimes through a verse of scripture. I had a portion this morning in my reading that was just the guidance I needed for today. It was spectacular.

Sometimes he does it through, I'd be sitting in a meeting like you are now, and the man would say something. He didn't have any idea what was going through my mind, and he'd say something and be just the very word I needed. Sometimes it comes through the advice of godly Christians.

And sometimes it comes through the marvelous converging of circumstances. I hadn't planned to do this, but maybe I'll just share an illustration of this. In 1964, I was still teaching at Emmaus Bible School, and the Lord was really burdening my heart about overseas, about the mission field, and going over there and working with a group of young people overseas.

And I was before the Lord and beseeching him to show his will one way or the other to me. And in October, on October 24th, 1964, I wrote to an unsaved friend of mine in New York. He was a fellow that had been with me in the service, and he worked for an advertising firm back in New York.

And in the course of the letter, I said to him, I'm waiting on the Lord for a green light with regard to going overseas. And I didn't get any answer for the letter. And Christmas came.

I got a Christmas card from him and his family, but that was all. No letter. When New Year's came, I had a very distinct impression from the Lord that he was going to show his will to me.

I can't explain. This is very subjective, I know, but it seemed to me that the Lord impressed on my heart, look, the answer's on the way. So I got down before the Lord, and once again, I said that.

I said, Lord, you know how stupid I am. And if you just give me one evidence of your will, I might miss it. So I'm asking you today to give me two or three evidences of your will when the guidance comes.

On February 9th, I got a letter from this friend in the East, and he talked on about a multitude of things in his letter. An unsafe fellow, mind you. And then toward the bottom of the letter, I've kept the letter.

Toward the bottom of the letter, he said, your dog-eared letter of October 24th is still before me. He said it reached me at a time when we were preparing a brochure for the European Travel Commission. He said, if all you're looking for is a green light from the Lord, why don't you adopt the slogan on our brochure? And out of the letter, fell the brochure, and it said, why wait till sometime? It's so easy to go to Europe now.

Boy, that hit me hard. That really hit me hard. Why wait till sometime? It's so easy to go to Europe now.

Well, I got down on my knees that night, and I said, Lord, I really believe you've spoken. I mean, just the timing of it, you know, the whole thing. And that was from an unsafe fellow.

That was February 9th. February 10th, I got a letter from a fellow named Frank Butts. Frank Butts was a former student of Emmaus, and he was living in Blaisdell, New York.

He was an expert auto mechanic, and I had heard that he was leaving with his family to go overseas to serve as a mechanic in Belgium with Christian Works. So I had sent him just a little fellowship, and on February 10th, I got a letter from him. He was rather a fresh guy, I might say, and I got a letter from him, and he said in it, he blabbed on for a while, and then he said, you know, it seems to me that the Lord has been sending out foot soldiers to the foreign fields.

He said, I've been wondering when he's going to send out some of the big guns like yourself. See, I said he was a bit of a fresh guy. But you know, it hit me hard.

Then I got down on my knees that night, and I said, Lord, I asked you for two or three witnesses. You gave me two. It's enough.

And I said, I'm going to go. On February 11th, something else happened that I'm not at liberty to divulge. I got down on my knees that night, and I said, Lord, I'm stupid, but I'm not that stupid.

What I'm saying is the Lord really accommodates himself to our weakness, and if you're really desperate to know the will of God, he has his own ways of showing it to you. He really does, and that has happened more than once in my life. I could tell you many interesting stories how it happened.

Okay, rule number two that I follow is this. If I'm seeking the guidance of God and no guidance comes, God's guidance is for me to stay where I am. If I'm seeking the guidance of God and no guidance comes, God's guidance is to stay where you are.

Darkness about going is light about staying. Good rule to follow. Don't be as the horse charging forward.

Wait. Waiting really on the Lord is one of the hardest things we do, isn't it? We'd rather do anything than wait. Okay, I'm seeking God's guidance that no guidance comes, stay where you are.

Darkness about going is light about staying. Number three, and I believe this, although it might surprise you, wait till the guidance is so clear that to refuse would be positive disobedience. I don't think God wants you to move hesitantly or with doubt in your mind, so you wait until the guidance is so clear that to refuse would be positive disobedience.

If I had refused to go as of February 11, 1965, I'd have been positively disobedient to the Lord. I asked his will, he showed me his will, there was nothing to do but to go. You see this in God's dealings with the children of Israel in the Old Testament.

They're marching through the wilderness, they have the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, and their instructions were, when the pillar moves, you move. And I think the pillar of fire, the pillar of cloud, speak of the Holy Spirit, don't you? The guidance of the Holy Spirit. And when he says move, move.

But if he doesn't say move, don't move. You know, that might be good for somebody. I have no doubt that somebody in our audience this afternoon is really before the Lord in all sincerity, waiting for a revelation of God's will.

Well, watch out for the pillar of cloud, for the pillar of fire. Then there's another verse, another little rule that has been a help to me, and that is Colossians 3, 15. Colossians 3, 15 says unto King James, And let the peace of God rule in your heart, to which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful.

But, once again, in other versions it says, Let the peace of Christ, well I don't know what word it does use, the Greek word there for rule means arbitrate, or umpire, I like that, umpire, monitor. And that has been tremendously helpful to me. Colossians 3, 15, Let the peace of Christ umpire in your heart.

You say, What do you mean? Well, I'm before the Lord, I want to know what he wants me to do. Maybe there are two possible, there are two alternatives. Do you have peace about one, and not about the other? I think this is very good.

When the Lord is really leading, a person has peace in his heart about the right way to go. If you don't have it, don't go. The wonderful thing to know God is leading, it takes care of all the problems.

For instance, it takes care of the problem of finances. God pays for what he orders, and if you can be positively sure that you're in the will of God, you don't have to start the mimeograph running and get all of those begging letters out. Okay, so there's our verse for today.

Don't be as the horse or the mule, but be very sensitive to the guidance of the Lord. Wait till he guides in an unmistakable way, and when he does guide, move. God isn't playing games with us.

Our second verse is James, chapter 1, verse 20. It says, the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. What does that mean? The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Well, of course, the wrath of man is the anger of man, isn't it? Temper. And what the verse is saying, that man doesn't do God's work by exploding in temper. Whatever else he does, it's not the work of God.

And the picture is not an unfamiliar one. A church business meeting is in session, sometimes called a men's meeting, and a decision has to be made. Well now, actually, they're not talking about great fundamentals of the faith.

It's not a question of the virgin birth, or of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, or the inerrancy of the scriptures. That's not the question. The question is what color to paint the kitchen.

Or maybe it has to do with distributing funds. It's some minor, peripheral, secondary matter. And all of a sudden an argument develops, and anger rises, and temperous flare, and shouting erupts, and a few strong-minded individuals prevail, and they stride out of the meeting, feeling that they have accomplished the will of God.

Well, dear friends, whatever else they've accomplished wasn't the will of God. God's work is not done in that way. The wrath of man does not work the righteousness of God.

Emerson once rushed out of a meeting where there had been a lot of argument and mental strife, and while he was still seething with rage, he seemed to hear the stars saying to him, why so hot, little man? How wonderfully the stars in their majesty and remote beauty hush our spirits, as if they were saying to us, nothing that's bothering you now is too big for God to handle. So that's true. God is great enough to take care of you, and the things that are upsetting you now are not as important as they seem.

Well, some of you here have lived long enough to know how even Christian people get upset about minor matters, and looking back 20 years, they do not seem that important. Now, we acknowledge that there is a place for righteous anger. We discussed that, I think, last week, and that time is when the honor of God is at stake.

There is a place for righteous anger when the honor of God is at stake. The Lord Jesus displayed righteous anger when he took the scourge of small cords and cleansed the temple. He didn't do it because of what men did to him.

He did it because of what men were doing to the house of God. The Lord Jesus was consumed with a passion for the glory of God, and he was intolerant of anything that detracted from the glory of God, and that's why the disciples remember that it was said of him, the zeal of thine house has eaten me up. The zeal of thine house has eaten me up.

And so, the lesson is that we should be lions in God's cause, but lambs in our own. That isn't the kind of wrath or anger that James is thinking about in this verse. He's thinking about the man who insists on having his own way.

When he's blocked, he explodes in anger. He's never wrong. His own judgment is infallible, and he can brook no dissent.

It's really a terrible way to be. I think that a mark of true spirituality in any man or any woman is when he's able to say, I was wrong. I am sorry.

Please forgive me. That's the mark of a broken person. When he can say that, I was wrong.

I'm sorry. Please forgive me. Those are some of the hardest words to come by.

Do you find them that way? I know that to the man of the world, these great bursts of temper are a sign of strength. He's climbing up the corporate ladder, and he has to crack the whip. He has to kick the face of those who are coming after him on the ladder.

It's a badge of leadership. It's a means of commanding respect, and the man of the world thinks that meekness is weakness. But the Lord Jesus has taught us a better way, and we know that when we lose our temper, we lose respect.

Every display of this kind of temper is a failure. It's a work of the flesh, not a fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is self-control.

The fruit of the Spirit is self-control. Giving place to God's wrath. What does that mean? It means stepping aside and letting God take over is really what it means.

Showing all meekness to all men, patiently enduring wrong, turning the other cheek. The Christian hinders the work of God by temper. He obscures a difference between himself and the man of the world.

The world can't see any difference. It seals his lips as far as testimony is concerned. When a Christian loses his temper, he loses his testimony.

So here's our little verse then. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. May the Lord help me to remember that when I tend to have a short fuse, when somebody is irritating or aggravating or provoking, and I'm tempted to fly off the handle.

A third verse is in Proverbs. Proverbs chapter 25 and verse 11. Proverbs chapter 25 and verse 11.

There it says, A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver or in baskets of silver. I don't care which reading you like in this verse. I think it says the same thing.

Just try to conjure up in your mind a picture and it has golden apples and silver pictures. What it says is it's pleasingly appropriate. There's something wonderful about being able to say the right word at the right time.

And some people have a real knack for this. We could call it a golden word, just saying the appropriate thing at the appropriate time. Proverbs 15 23 says, A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth and a word spoken in due season, how good it is.

Illustration. Some years ago, Mrs. Harlow was dying back in New Jersey, Margaret Harlow, and she was very, very low. She was in the hospital.

And one of the elders went into the hospital this night. It was really just at closing time, just about nine o'clock. And he went in and he went into her room and she was conscious, but she wasn't able to talk.

And he leaned over her bed and he said, Who is this that goeth up out of the wilderness leaning on her beloved? He quoted that from the song of Solomon, chapter eight, verse five. Who is this that goeth up out of the wilderness leaning on her beloved? And she looked up and smiled. And by morning light, she had gone up out of the wilderness leaning on her beloved.

It's great, isn't it? To be able to just say the right word at the right time, especially if it's a word from the scripture. Here's a family that's numb with grief over the loss of a loved one. The loved one has gone to heaven, but that doesn't mean there isn't grief.

That doesn't mean there isn't sorrow. Only that we sorrow not as others who have no hope. And dear Dr. Ironside, I first should say that, you know, the friends crowd around and they try to say things that are

helpful, but so far nothing has helped the family.

But then Dr. Ironside sits down and he writes the letter, and at the bottom of the letter he writes, Psalm 30, verse five. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. And you know that little verse just snaps the grief of that family, and the sorrow of death is passed.

What a wonderful verse. I guess what it really means in the original is weeping may come as an overnight gift, but joy comes in the morning. Really beautiful.

Some young people were going back from school. A bunch of them had piled into a car and they were driving from the Midwest to the East Coast. And one of those Christian young people had started to imbibe some doubts and denials concerning the Word of God, and he began spouting some of these to these other Christian young people.

There was one fellow in the car, and he's a very quiet fellow. You'd hardly know he was ever there. And when this fellow who had been feeding on these doubts and denials, when he came up for air, this quiet fellow in the car said, cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causes to err from the words of knowledge.

Quit listening to teaching that causes you to err from the words of knowledge. And you know that was just the arrow in the quiver of the Holy Spirit for that moment. Wasn't that good? A young fellow having memorized that verse, and the Spirit of God is just able to take it and use it at the exact right time.

Like apples of gold in pictures of silver. The famous atheist Ingersoll was having a lecture at a huge auditorium, and in the course of his lecture to dramatize his atheism, he called upon God, if there is a God, to strike me dead in five minutes. And then he stopped talking, and a tremendous hush came over the audience.

The people waited breathlessly as the clock ticked away the five minutes. Now the course of five minutes came, and Ingersoll was gloating there on the platform, having proved that no God exists. And just then, a nondescript Christian, way at the back of the auditorium, stood and said, Mr. Ingersoll, do you think you can exhaust the mercy of God in five minutes? Well, you know, it was just the right word.

It was just the right word. The proper word at the proper time is truly a gift from God, and we should covet the gift of bringing the proper word of comfort, of encouragement, of warning, or even of rebuke. A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

And I'm sure that some of you here can think of other illustrations of where just the right word was spoken at just the right time. Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 7. Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 7. Well, I should really go back to verse 5 here for the context. I'll read 5 through 8. Ephesians 6, 5 through 8, it says, Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart as unto Christ.

Not with eye service as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service as unto the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And the words that I'm especially interested in, I'm interested in all of them, but the words I'm thinking about this afternoon are in verse 7, with goodwill doing service as to the Lord and not to men. Now, first of all, I think it's good that Paul is here writing to slaves.

It says in verse 5, servants. Well, there were two kinds of servants in Bible times. There were hired servants, they worked for a wage, and there were bond servants, and they were slaves who belonged to their masters.

You know that. You know that slavery existed in Bible times. And that's the type of person that the Lord Jesus is speaking, that Paul by inspiration is speaking to here, bond servants.

And we learn a very wonderful lesson here, and that is this. These slaves, maybe they're working out in the field, or maybe they're domestic slaves, maybe they're working around and in the house. It doesn't make any difference.

Paul here teaches that any honorable work, no matter how menial it is, can be done to the glory of God. Now, I think that's wonderful. Notice some of the expressions he uses here.

Verse 5, as unto Christ. Verse 6, the servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart. Imagine that.

Imagine that, slaves out in the field, toiling with the crops, and he says, the servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart. And verse 7, doing service as to the Lord. They weren't in the pulpit.

They weren't in what we would call Christian work. But notice how Paul dignifies and honors the work they were doing, doing service as to the Lord. And notice it says in verse 8, they would be rewarded for doing a good job.

You say, working in the kitchen? Rewarded? This is what it says. They would be rewarded for doing a good job, knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. Well, we tend to distinguish between the secular and the sacred.

We say, well, working out in the field, that's secular. Working in an office, that's secular. Working in the kitchen, that's secular.

Working behind the pulpit, that's sacred. This passage of scripture disproves that altogether. Could you mop a floor to the glory of God? Well, if this passage says anything, it says you can't.

Could you clean a house to the glory of God or shovel snow to the glory of God or mow a lawn to the glory of God? That's just what it's talking about, that type of thing. As unto Christ, the servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart. That is really wonderful.

And we learn something else here, and that is this, that no matter how low a person may be on the social ladder, these people were slaves, no matter how low they might be on the social ladder, they're not cut off from the choicest blessings and rewards of Christianity. It says, knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. That really exalts our day-by-day work, doesn't it? It really does.

And I hope we all have the vision of that, that by doing a good job, by being a testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ, we can really bring honor to his name. I have a young friend in the south of Ireland. The south of Ireland is predominantly Catholic, and Ronnie Phillips is a young Christian fellow down there, and at one time he was looking for a job, and I was with him at the time there in Ireland, and I said to him, I guess it's hard for you, a Protestant, getting a job here in the south of Ireland.

He said, on the contrary, he said, they would rather hire Christians. That was a nice testimony, wasn't it? They would rather hire Christians. They tell me that in the days when Paul wrote this to the Ephesians, and the slaves would be sold out on the Christian slave, along with others would be sold out in the slave market, a Christian slave always brought a much higher price than a non-Christian slave.

Well, you can see why. Just read those verses, and they tell you why. And I've also read in church history that some of the early Christians actually sold themselves into slavery that they might reach their masters for the Lord Jesus.

Amazing, isn't it? God has his wonderful ways of working. So each of us should pray, teach me, my God and King, in all things thee to see, and what I do in anything to do it as for thee. You know, no job is ideal in life, at least I don't think it is.

I don't know of any job that's absolutely ideal. I taught for a number of years, and I really enjoy teaching, but I don't enjoy correcting exams. I just don't enjoy it.

To me, it's monotonous, just more of the same. And I had to come to this place in the scripture. I said, Lord, it may not be the thing I best like to do, but help me to do it for your glory.

Because it really means a lot to the students, doesn't it? It really does. And what I do in anything to do it as for thee. Okay, 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 21.

1 Corinthians chapter 1 and 21. I've really been enjoying this passage of scripture and would like to share it with you this afternoon. 1 Corinthians 1 21.

It says, For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God. It pleased God by the foolishness of the preaching. It really means by the foolishness of the thing preached to save them that believe.

Now, just let me give you a little background that might help us to understand this first chapter of 1 Corinthians. Corinth, located in Greece. The Greeks loved philosophy, loved philosophy, the love of wisdom, and of course, human wisdom in their case.

And the Apostle Paul comes to a place like that, and he preaches the gospel of redeeming grace. To the Jews, it's scandalous, and to the Greeks, it's foolishness. In other words, the gospel really didn't fit into the mold of the Greek mind, the natural Greek mind.

For instance, for the Lord Jesus to come and die to save, people would say that death on the cross would be the ultimate in weakness, not in strength. And so I believe that when Paul wrote to the Corinthians, it was a temptation to dress up the gospel. You see, if you want to appeal to intellectuals, if you want to appeal to those that like philosophy, well, there might be the temptation to try to make the gospel intellectually respectable, and I think that's what was happening.

The Greeks were preoccupied with the wisdom of the world, and this made the Christians there sensitive to those aspects of the Christian message which was offensive to the philosophers. I don't think the Christians had any thought of abandoning the faith, but just redefining it, you know, so that it would be more palatable to the scholars, and that's going on today. That's going on today.

There is a great emphasis today on scholarship. Paul came down on this attempt to marry the wisdom of the world to the wisdom of God. He didn't like it.

He knew that if he was to achieve intellectual status with the Corinthians, he'd lose the power of God in the message he preached. And I think you and I should face it that there is that about the gospel message that is scandalous and foolish to the men of the world. We ourselves, we're not what the world would call wise, mighty, noble.

Instead of belonging to the intelligentsia, most of us are just nobodies, non-persons, as far as the world is concerned. But the wonderful thing is that God can take non-persons and use them in a mighty way. He can use a message that seems to be foolish to the men of the world, and he can save people that believe through it.

And of course, in so doing, he confounds all the pomp and pretension of the philosophers of this world. He eliminates any chance of our boasting, and he ensures that he alone gets the glory. Let me illustrate it this way.

Supposing you want a table made, and there are some friends who could make it. There are some friends there who can go down to the scrap pile and get some old lumber and make a beautiful table. Or there are some young fellows who just got out of trade school, and they can go down to their lumber yard and get some brand new lumber and make a table with the same specifications.

It's more glory to the people who can take scrap lumber and accomplish the same purpose, isn't it? It's more glory. Listen, that's what God's in the business of doing. He's in the business of taking people like ourselves, not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble, to accomplish his purposes.

Because then he gets all the glory. People look at the instruments and they say, well, it sure isn't McDonald's. It must be the Lord.

And that's just what God wants, isn't it? Just exactly what God wants. Now, I'm not here to say that there isn't any place for scholarship. But I want to tell you that scholarship, apart from spirituality, is a very dangerous thing.

William Kelly, and I know what he meant when he said it, he said, there are no people left to be trusted than scholars. Now, he meant scholars apart from spirituality. Let me illustrate it.

I read a scholarly book recently, and it said Mark had more authoritative sources to draw from when he wrote his gospel than Matthew did when he wrote his. That's scholarship. Well, thanks a lot.

I don't want it. As far as I'm concerned, Mark had the same source to draw from that Matthew did. That's the Holy Spirit of God.

The scholar says, well, John is the least reliable of all the four gospels. Well, if that's scholarship, they can keep it. I'm not the least bit interested.

But you know, there is a segment of the evangelical world that craves for acceptance with the scholarly world. And I want to tell you, you pay an awfully awful price when you do. I don't like it when scholarship sits in judgment on the word of God.

I like it when the word of God sits in judgment on scholarship. I try never to come to the word of God with my mind above the word of God. I try to come to the scriptures with my mind on its knees.

Now, that might be quite a mixed up metaphor, but you know what I mean, don't you? When we court the approbation of scholars, we're vulnerable to all their heresy. And that's what Paul is talking about in this first chapter. He didn't come to Corinth with excellence of speech and wisdom.

He was determined to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified. He knew that the power lay in the simple, straightforward presentation of the gospel message and not in occupation with naughty problems of scholarship, unprofitable theories or the worship of intellectualism. Watch out for the worship of intellectualism.

You'll lose the power of the word of God. For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of the... not the foolishness of preaching. It doesn't mean that preaching is a foolish message, but it's the foolishness of the thing preached.

The message seems foolish to men, but the wonderful thing about it is it works. Stick to the gospel. One verse of scripture is worth a thousand arguments.

Shall we pray? Father, we thank you for feeding us today from your precious word. It is food, food for our souls. We're reminded that the Lord Jesus said, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Oh, Father, may we come as newborn babes, desiring the sincere milk of the word. May we have that ravenous appetite for the word of God and appropriate it so that it may change our lives. We ask in Jesus name.

Amen.

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