

God's Foolishness

Digging Deeper

1. Paul says that proclaiming Christ crucified is “a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to gentiles.” Read Acts 17:1-9. Why do you think the message that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer, die, and rise from the dead problematic? Did all Jews respond the same way? Why were some of them jealous, do you think?

Now read Acts 17:10-15. Compare the reaction of the Jews in this passage to those in the last passage. Why do you think they were more receptive to Paul’s message? How is this a model for when we are confronted by new or different teachings?

Now read the next section, Acts 17:16-21. Why do you think the gentile philosophers were confused and befuddle by Paul’s message? What is *their* reaction to Paul’s message? How is this a model for when we are confronted by new or different teachings?

Now read the final section in this chapter, Acts 17:22-34. How does Paul adjust his message for a different (non-Jewish) audience? What are the different reactions Paul receives? How does this help us to share our own particular message about the Good News of Jesus?

2. In James 3:13-17, James talks about the world’s wisdom versus God’s wisdom. Why might people who follow the ways of worldly wisdom think that Godly wisdom is foolish?

Which of these Godly attributes do you think Christians seem to be doing the best job of in our country today? Which would you say is the most lacking? Why?

3. Read Job 28:12-28. What does this passage teach us about the source of true wisdom?

Taking It Home

4. Where do you see the “world” celebrating “wisdom” that contradicts the message of the cross? What is the result of following such wisdom? Why do you think this is?

In what ways is the message of the cross “foolishness” in our culture? Where do you see people in our culture proclaiming Jesus, but not the message of the cross? Why do you think this is? What does it look like to proclaim or live the “foolish” message of the cross?

How does the realization that God calls the weak to display his power (1 Cor. 1:27) affect your view of your own inadequacies?

What does it mean to “boast in the Lord” rather than in personal achievements or personal accomplishments? What would that look like in your life? What would that look like in your life this week?