

Lesson #6

²⁰ Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

²² For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom;

1 Corinthians 1:20-22

INTRODUCTION

1. This text directly follows what Paul had written earlier
1 Corinthians 1:18-19
2. The focus is on the Wisdom of God

THREE GROUPS OF PEOPLE

1. The Wise

General grouping

- a) Jews
- b) Gentiles

2. The Scribes

The Jewish factor

- a) These were scholars
- b) They were a small group of people with a strong Jewish background

3. The Disputer of the world

The Gentile factor

- a) The philosophers

- b) Paul had encountered them when he was in Athens
4. God had discounted them
- a) Romans 1 (Gentiles)
 - b) Romans 2 (Jews)

THE WORLD AT LARGE

1. The world did not discover God through worldly wisdom
2. God's Will and Plan
 - a) The preaching of the Gospel
 - b) The preaching of the Cross
 - c) Through the preaching of God's word, people find salvation

THE JEWISH PROBLEM

1. They demand signs
2. They would otherwise not believe

THE GREEK (GENTILE) PROBLEM

1. They demand "wisdom"
2. They measure all thoughts according to their philosophies

PAUL'S MESSAGE AT THE AEROPAGUS (ATHENS)

¹⁶ Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols. ¹⁷ Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, "What does this ^ababbler want to say?"

Others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods," because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection.

¹⁹ And they took him and brought him to the ¹⁹Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new doctrine is of which you speak?" ²⁰ For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. Therefore we want to know what these things mean." ²¹ For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.

²² Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; ²³ for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription:

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: ²⁴ God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. ²⁵ Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. ²⁶ And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, ²⁷ so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; ²⁸ for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' ²⁹ Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. ³⁰ Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, ³¹ because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

³² And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, while others said, "We will hear you again on this matter." ³³ So Paul departed from among them. ³⁴ However, some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Acts 17:16-34

1. Responses

- a) Some mocked
- b) Some sat on the fence
- c) Some believed

2. Corinth had its own share of philosophers

a) Epicurean

b) Stoic