

1 Corinthians 1:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Analysis

Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men (hoti to mōron tou theou sophōteron tōn anthrōpōn estin, kai to asthenes tou theou ischyroteron tōn anthrōpōn, ὅτι τὸ μωρὸν τοῦ θεοῦ σοφώτερον τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐστίν, καὶ τὸ ἀσθενὲς τοῦ θεοῦ ἰσχυρότερον τῶν ἀνθρώπων)—Paul employs irony: even if we grant (hypothetically) that God has "foolishness" and "weakness," they still surpass the best human wisdom and strength. The comparatives sophōteron (σοφώτερον, "wiser") and ischyroteron (ἰσχυρότερον, "stronger") emphasize the infinite gap between divine and human capacity.

Of course, God has no actual foolishness or weakness—Paul is speaking from the world's perspective. What humans call God's foolishness (the cross) is infinitely wiser than human philosophy. What humans call God's weakness (Christ's crucifixion) is infinitely more powerful than human strength. This verse demolishes human pride and self-sufficiency: even God at His apparent "lowest" infinitely exceeds humanity at its best.

Historical Context

The ancient world (like today) admired power, eloquence, and wisdom. Rome boasted military might, Greece boasted philosophy, Israel boasted the Law. God subverted all three by choosing the cross—apparent weakness, folly, and curse—as the means of salvation. This inverted worldly values and humbled human pride,

demonstrating that God's ways are categorically higher than human ways (Isa 55:8-9).

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the cross demonstrate that God's "foolishness" surpasses human wisdom?
2. What does Christ's crucifixion reveal about the nature of true power versus worldly strength?
3. How should the infinite superiority of God's wisdom and power shape our confidence in the gospel despite cultural mockery?

Interlinear Text

ὅτι	τὸ	μωρὸν	τοῦ	θεοῦ	σοφώτερον	τῶν
Because G3754	G3588	the foolishness G3474	G3588	of God G2316	wiser than G4680	G3588
ἀνθρώπων	ἐστίν	καὶ	τὸ	ἀσθενές	τοῦ	θεοῦ
men G444	is G2076	and G2532	G3588	the weakness G772	G3588	of God G2316
ἰσχυρότερον	τῶν	ἀνθρώπων	ἐστίν			
stronger than G2478	G3588	men G444	is G2076			

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 1:18 (References God): For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

2 Corinthians 13:4 (References God): For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

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