

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

Micah 6:1-8

Psalm 15

Lord, who may abide upon your holy hill? (v1)

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Matthew 5:1-12

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly & the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger & thirst for justice, & perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words & deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

¹⁸The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, & the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." ²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs & Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews & foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews & Greeks, Christ the power of God & the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, & God's weakness is stronger than human strength. ²⁶Consider your own call, brothers & sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low & despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, & righteousness & sanctification & redemption, ³¹in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. St. Paul uses "boast" about 54 times in his letters. Perhaps *Galatians 6:14* summarizes it best "May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, & I to the world." Consider particularly *1 Corinthians 4:7, 9:16; 2 Corinthians 10:17, 11:30, 12:9*. What is Paul advocating for or against? *Use your Bible's study notes. See also Romans 3:21-28; 4:1-8, 5:1-11; Small Catechism: Creed 2, Small & Large Catechisms (#3 below) available bookofconcord.org*
2. Read *1 Corinthians 2:1-16* (& *Ephesians 6:12*). How does the unexpectedness of the Crucifixion (cf. *Matthew 16:21-23*) further St. Paul's point about not boasting in oneself, but only in Jesus? How is it easier to believe/trust in a "heroic" salvation/savior instead of what the gospels record?

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. Review the Large Catechism's explanation of Holy Baptism. What stands out to you as contrary to conventional wisdom? What is new to you? What question do you have?
4. People often tell their pastors, "I don't know enough about [*some faith thing*] to learn more [*at some event/seminar/study*]." First, what makes that objection illogical? Second, what do you think is really behind such an excuse? What were you avoiding or hiding when you made that excuse (or a similar one)?

NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. Reflect on the 5 most recent new things you learned to do in front of others. How did you feel about it then? How do you feel about that new thing now? How would you show someone else how to do it? How does your experience as a "newbie" help you have compassion for others as they learn newly about Jesus?
6. What helps you not feel foolish about attending worship & giving generously? How can you help someone else share in that same confidence?

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Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
Series: What's Up with Baptism?

01.29.23
Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Unconventional Wisdom

It's OK to feel dumb as a noob; enthusiasm makes it better

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise;
God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong. (v27)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

Rejoice & be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. (*Matthew 5:12*)

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