

1 Cor 1.10-31
Where's The Wise Guy?

Is life about getting to the top?

“divisions” – in Greek the word is used to describe a tear in a fishing net or garment.

Paul isn't talking about people not disagreeing. He's pleading that we agree not to tear apart the body of Christ.

Some believers in Corinth were attaching themselves to important names so they could climb higher than their brothers and sisters. It was all about the competition and status seeking that defined the culture of Corinth.

There is always a danger that we will let the culture shape the church.

Paul's response is to point us back to the cross.

Or looking to the cross?

¹⁷ *...Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.*

The gospel is the message of the cross.

¹⁸ *For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

The gospel divides the world, into those who are perishing and those who are being saved.

Jesus said as much himself (Matt 10:34,38,39)

Where's the wise guy?

²⁰ *Where is the wise man?...*

Paul wasn't against education; but he was against finding your value and your status in education, or giving highly educated people some kind of preferential treatment or power.

The cross turns things upside-down

Paul is sceptical about the power of education, of “wisdom” and “knowledge” because, *“the world through its wisdom did not know God.”*

Jews looked for great acts of power. Greeks looked for convincing arguments and fine words. No-one was looking for a poor man who was executed as a criminal on a cross.

Most of us are nothings and nobodies. That's OK, because...*God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong...*

Nobody has any status except that which comes from Jesus, *who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.*

³¹ *Therefore, as it is written: “Let anyone who boasts boast in the Lord.”*