

Kings Norton Baptist Church

Sunday 21st April 2024 10 am

"Boasting in the Lord"

Welcome to all

Opening Scripture Psalm 47:1,2,8

Hymn MP 445 Lord the light of your love is shining

Scripture Psalm 33 (page 560)

Prayer

Children's talk

Chorus MP 497 O give thanks to the Lord

Notices Thursday, Welcome churches, convention & Midlands Men,
Judy Cooke prayer letter

Prayer and Lord's prayer

Readings I Corinthians 1:17-31 (page 1144)

Hymn MP 663 The price is paid (3:20)

Sermon *Boasting in the Lord*

Hymn CH 53 All Glory and praise (NCH56 Thine the Glory) v3

Closing Prayer:

Prayer and Exordium

How big is your God? I know it sounds a bit cliché but I'm serious, how big is your God? Is he strong? Is he powerful? Is he trustworthy? Of course how you live as a Christian, or otherwise, gives the answer to that! Yes, how you live; not what you say.

■ At Crusaders we sing with gusto: "our God is a great big God".

A small god elicits little trust. Do you have little power for you have a little god? May I suggest our problems stem from a wrong view of God. Satan's aim with Eve in the garden of Eden was to distort her view of God.

⇒ The devil presents to us a small view of God - and a large view of man.

The Christians at Corinth has fallen for that, as we saw last time in the previous passage; They didn't boast in God, they boasted in man, one looked to Paul, another looked to Apollos, another to Peter, etc., and who are they? Mere men. They took their status - from men.

⇒ A man at best - is at best, - a man

Strike them with terror, O LORD; let the nations know they are but men. Ps 9:20

Turn the page and you read Paul's rebuke: "**What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, x2 through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task.**" 1Co 3:5 they are 'but men'.

Chapter 1 reveals a worldly mindedness of the Christians at Corinth, sadly in Chapter 3 Paul has to return to this problem again. In their thinking they are carnal, fleshly, not spiritual. That is they think the way the world thinks. We should and must as reborn people with renewed minds view the world with the Lord enthroned, not man.

In the middle Paul wants to make a simple point, man can do nothing - God does everything x2. Therefore all our boasting is to be in Him not me. ³¹ **Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."**

Now you might say I don't boast in man, I see how untrustworthy he is. But do you boast in yourself? Or if not do you trust in your ability to reason things through? Or do you trust in your efforts to be good or to do good? Do you lean on your sufficiency, on your independence?

Here Paul shows that there is nothing you and I can do, look to, or trust in, that has any merit or value - except the Lord - and His way. May there be no boasting of anything in your heart and mine - bar boasting in Him! That is the essence of the message this morning, that we boast only in Him.

Baptism

Firstly Paul has to put baptism in its right place. **17 For Christ did not send me to baptise, but to preach the gospel—**

Do not wrongly elevate baptism. Churches increasingly it seems encourage people to be baptized. That is not wise. It is often based on a people centered ‘what I have done’ mentality.

They are baptized, it is a happy morning, they think “I am better for it”, they think “I will be stronger for it”, they think “surely the Lord is more pleased with me”. And many sadly think they have earned some favour, even thinking this is their entry into the Kingdom of God, that they are now saved. They are in error, they are deluded, and worse off than before.

■ “When did you become a Christian?” I ask and sadly more people than I can say immediately cite their baptism.

No. Baptism is an outward sign, a public declaration, of an invisible inner change, a change wrought by the Spirit of God and by Him alone in the human heart. This x2 is the real change. This is the change we demonstrate by going under the water and back up again. It is this we testify to. It is a sovereign work of God in which we play no part x2. When that happens and the Spirit of God has begun to indwell that person they become alive in Christ and are powerfully enabled by His presence to take on His character. The result is a changed - and changing person - able and willing to repent. This ongoing working of reforming to Christ-likeness continues in a life of repentance and faith. This is true conversion.

17 For Christ did not send me to baptise, but to preach the gospel—

Paul knew some in the church considered there to be ‘kudos’ in their being baptized. “I was baptized by the great apostle Paul! I was baptized by Peter himself, I was baptized in the Jordan river where Jesus was baptized”. Mt 3:13

■ I remember helping someone with his car, he insisted on paying me, I said no it is a gift. Can you imagine giving a gift to your child and they then try to pay you for it! How would you feel?

Favour with God does need to be paid for. It requires a cost far beyond your ability to pay. It is the cost of a perfect life which you and I do not have. That cost has been paid for in Christ and that perfect life then given up on the cross, a work he did, because you cannot. **“It is finished”** he declared so that now, to all, favour with God may come free of charge. It is a gospel of grace alone, a gift. Do not add to it – for if you do - you steal away from it.

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

Then Paul speaks about the message of the cross -

God’s means by which men and women are saved is through a message, a powerful message, about a person. He continues **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.** Then again we have in chapter 2:4 **My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, 5 so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power.**”

Notice the repeated word ‘power’ x3, the **power of God** v17, v18, v24, 2:4, 2:5, and over in 1 Co 4:20 **For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk - but of power.**

And this power? It is found in the message about a certain man who died on a cross. It doesn’t make sense, quite **the message of the cross is foolishness** v18

Go back in time before the gospel of Jesus was preached and ask anyone anywhere in the world: “how will man find favour with God?” you would never, ever hear them say that God himself would come into this world as a man and suffer as a common criminal. It is preposterous, it is ridiculous, it is bizarre, it is abhorrent. It is shocking. It is blasphemous.

Search the religions of the world that are not influenced by Christianity and you would never find such an idea.

Search the religions that are based on Christianity, all the Bible based cults; Mormonism, Jehovah’s witnesses, Christadelphians, Roman Catholicism, the orthodox churches, nominal Christianity, and many others, get behind their words and you find it is a cross-less faith. Subtle though it may be, but it is there. This is man’s way, this is the devil’s way, who prompted that last final desperate cry to Jesus **“come down from the cross and save yourself!”** Mr 15:30

Jesus Christ had such an ignominious and shameful death, that the Crucifixion was rarely depicted in Christian art before the 6th century AD.

But Christ, God incarnate, the suffering servant, is God’s way. nothing else.

Are you trusting in Him alone, boasting only in Him alone? Or are you still trusting in something else? If so repent of it, stop it.

Our way - opposes Christ’s way.

Paul, in showing the Christians this lays out the gauntlet, the challenge.

Imagine a man standing in the ring saying “come on then, let’s see you, who

is going to beat me?"²⁰ **Where is the wise man? Show me, Where is the scholar? OK clever clogs Where is the philosopher of this age?**

Or we might say the rationalist, the scientist, the expert who are now called upon, like a new priestly caste, to tell us all how things are, and should be.

As do all those who stand in wide-eyed wonder at new discoveries whether at the bottom of the ocean or the ends of the universe. Like those excitable space scientists whose discoveries raise more questions than they solve, who then run back to rewrite their theories, again.

Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world. Can you not see it?

■ God is spirit, how do you scientist discover a spirit? What instrument do you use?

Here Paul lays out a fundamental principle that man lives in his darkness, he has no power, no wisdom, no understanding. Man at his best can do nothing, know nothing, discover nothing, achieve nothing, gain nothing. How proud we are to think we can, how deluded. That is why man's no. is 66666666 (7)

⇒ God has all power, all wisdom and all understanding, we are easily led to believe he doesn't, but he does. We who know him, let us say so - and boast in Him.

Two groups

Paul had two main audiences before him, two mindsets, the Jews and the Greeks. Those adhering to Judaism - and the non-Jews - pagan in outlook,

22 Jews demand miraculous signs - and Greeks look for wisdom.

Jews looked for something to marvel at. The Greeks impressed with status. At the top of the ladder were the philosophers, the debaters, the polemicists, the orators. So we in our post enlightenment world, look to cleverness, to my mind, to reason. You can see it in the arguments that are brought.

■ I was watching a debate between a Muslim Mohammed Hijab and Jordan Peterson. An interesting mix. One a Muslim apologist the other a clever rationalist. They were discussing Christianity. Mohammed said of the Trinity "it doesn't make sense". He didn't believe it because it didn't make sense to him, his mind was the arbiter of truth. God was in the dock and found wanting. Jordan Peterson acknowledged that the Trinity was orthodox teaching of Christianity but said, if I can paraphrase, "I don't understand it either".

Although verbalized in different opposite ways, to both it was foolishness.

Well, I don't understand it, but this is how God has revealed himself to be - and I believe it. But then I don't understand how God could speak this world into existence, or become a man and still be God, or how he can marry his sovereign will with human responsibility, but he can do it, and he has.

⇒ What a challenge to human pride. No more boasting.

"It doesn't make sense" to which Proverbs 3 says "**Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.**" Prov 3:5-7

Jews

22 **Jews demand miraculous signs** "Impress us" x2 they say. Joh 2:18 **Then the Jews demanded of him, "What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?"** and again in 6:3 **they asked him, "What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do?"**

(and Mt.'16:1-4). Impress us! Do you rely on a 'sign'? Reliance on a sign actually implies distrust of God. The Jews have a wrong view of God and His word, and therefore in their expectation of a spectacular Messiah.

This was their idea of how the Messiah would and should be and refused to have a Messiah who was not strong. They wanted their King Saul, a head taller than the rest, strong and impressive. They had a selective view of scripture, and only saw what they wanted to see, and therefore expect.

Jesus did not come to Jerusalem on a tall Arabian Charger but on a donkey, and even smaller, its colt. "I am not your kind of King" Jesus is saying.

⇒ It appears to be 'nonsense' that the Son of Almighty God should go unrecognized and be so ill-treated. Men would expect the Lord to destroy sin, but not apparently to be destroyed by it. (Phillips)

"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." 1Co 1:18

Is it foolish to you, and you won't entertain it? or is it the power of your salvation? God turns the tables and uses **the weak to confound the strong.**

1. Who would you put your money on David - or on Goliath?
2. How many men would you chose against the vast army of the Midianites, would you say to most of Gideon's army "go home"?
3. Are you like the powerful military General Naaman who when told to go and wash in the river Jordan to be cleansed of his leprosy, scoffed

and went off in a great rage, “that river, that small river, why not the big rivers?”. No God doesn’t do things your way. Naaman changed, he was humbled, and made his boast in the Lord.

4. Do you ‘understand’ what Jesus means when he says: “**you must be born again**”? It didn’t make sense to religious Nicodemus.
5. Are you here this morning because you want to feel better? Like those who had their fill at the feeding of the 5000 and yet would come to Jesus the bread of ‘life’!
6. Are you like the woman at the well who didn’t see she needed ‘living water’.
7. The Jews had many laws to be obeyed – to be obeyed not just because they made sense, which some didn’t. But to show who loved God.

The Christians at Corinth were liable to lean either of two ways. Those from a Greek background said “I will only believe if it makes sense to me, if it agrees with my wisdom, my mind, my reasoning, my ability.

Or they leant towards the Jews and thought to be impressed with spiritual gifts. Today many in church are impressed with music, lights, colours, flags, buildings, programmes, or come to see and hear charismatic leaders.

Paul said 2:2 **For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.** And said: **I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish ‘dung’, that I may gain Christ** Php 3:8

⇒ **What a challenge to human pride. Will you like him, boast in the Lord?**

To the Jew a crucified Messiah was unthinkable Dt. 21:23, Gal. 3:13 while for God to take human form and then be put to death was to Greek incomprehensible **23 but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,**

This present, this gospel of life comes in plain brown paper packaging.

You cannot impress someone into the Kingdom of God, you cannot reason someone into the kingdom of God. But when someone is saved suddenly the light comes on, a preached or spoken word jumps up at them, and most of the time the speaker does not even know he said it. It is God’s doing.

24 but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 21 **For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, what man cannot do - God did. God**

was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

God has chosen something foolish 2:5 **so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power.”**

The church

The church at Corinth, a large church was formed against all odds. It was quite extraordinary that there should be Holy people in such a godless city.

What was done was done by God. So how wrong it is to have in the church a party spirit, a proud worldly mindset that looked to people.

‘What have the philosopher and the writer of this world to show for all their wisdom?’ nothing. So how can each Corinthian party argue for its greater cleverness? True 'rightness' comes from a broken heart, not from brains.

“26 Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.

■ **Is that not also the case here this morning? Have you thought of your life before Christ transformed it? Were you important? Were you rich? Were you well connected? What had you achieved?**

Few Corinthian Christians were outstanding according to the sophisticated society of the day; but their transformed lives demonstrated how God was overturning the world's standards, by using the foolish, the weak, the low. Most were both low in birth as slaves, and low in morals.

A believer's new life comes solely from God v30 **“It is because of him – and only because of him - that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.”**

God's purpose is for you to end to any self-congratulation before Him, to throw out that false trust, to stop the boasting. It’s a challenge to our pride.

The only boasting permitted the Christian - is in what Christ has done for us.

31 Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

And Jesus as God deserves and requires your full trust and love. Christ’s deity is confirmed in Paul's application of Jer 9:23 **This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD.** Jer 9:23-24 Amen _____ **END**

"Boasting in the Lord"

你的神有多大？我知道這聽起來有點陳腔濫調，但我是認真的，你的上帝有多大？他很強嗎？他很強嗎？他值得信賴嗎？當然，你作為基督徒的生活方式，或者其他方面，給了答案！是的，你如何生活；不是你說的。

在十字軍，我們熱情地歌唱：「我們的上帝是一位偉大的上帝」。一個小神不會引起太多信任。你有小神，你的力量就小嗎？我想說的是，我們的問題源自於對上帝的錯誤看法。撒但在伊甸園裡對待夏娃的目的是要扭曲她對神的看法。

□ 魔鬼向我們展示了對上帝的狹隘看法，以及對人的宏觀看法。

正如我們在上一篇文章中看到的那樣，哥林多的基督徒已經陷入了困境。他們不誇神，他們誇人，一個看保羅，一個看亞波羅，一個看彼得，等等，他們是誰？只不過是男人而已。他們從男人那裡奪走了自己的地位。

□ 一個男人充其量 - 充其量， - 一個男人

耶和華啊，用驚嚇擊打他們；讓各國知道他們不過是人。詩篇 9:20 翻過這一頁，你會看到保羅的責備：「亞波羅到底是什麼？保羅是什麼？只有僕人，x2透過他們你才相信——

正如主給每個人分配的任務一樣。1Co 3:5 他們「不過是人」。

第一章揭示了哥林多基督徒的世俗思想，可悲的是，在第三章保羅不得不再次回到這個問題。在他們的思想裡，他們是屬肉體的、肉體的，而不是屬靈的。這就是他們以世界的方式思考。作為重生的人，我們應該而且必須以更新的心智來看待世界，以主為王，而不是以人為王。

在中間，保羅想表達一個簡單的觀點，人無能為力—神做一切x2。因此，我們所有的誇口都是在祂裡面，而不是在我裡面。31

因此，如經上所記：“誇口的當指著主誇口。”

現在你可能會說我不誇人，我看他是多麼不值得信任。但你誇自己嗎？或者如果不是，你相信自己推理事物的能力嗎？或者你相信自己努力做好事或做好事嗎？你依賴你的自給自足、依賴你的獨立嗎？

保羅在這裡表明，除了主和祂的道路之外，你和我沒有任何可以做、可以期待或可以信賴的東西有任何優點或價值。願你我心中都沒有任何可誇口的事——

除了以祂為榮之外！這就是今天早上信息的精髓：我們只以祂為榮。

洗禮

首先，保羅必須把洗禮放在正確的位置。17 因為基督差我來不是為施洗，而是為傳福音—。

不要錯誤地高舉洗禮。教會似乎越來越鼓勵人們接受洗禮。這是不明智的。它通常基於以人為本的“我所做的”心態。

他們受了洗，這是一個快樂的早晨，他們認為“我因此而變得更好”，他們認為“我會因此而變得更堅強”，他們認為“主肯定對我更滿意”。許多人悲傷地認為他們已經贏得了一些恩惠，甚至認為這是他們進入神的國度，他們現在已經得救了。他們犯了錯誤，他們被迷惑了，而且比以前更糟了。

“你什麼時候成為基督徒的？”我問過，可悲的是，有更多的人立即引用他們的洗禮。

不。這個x2才是真正的改變。這就是我們透過潛入水下並再次返回來演示的變化。我們證明的就是這一點。這是上帝主權的工作，我們不參與其中x2。當這種情況發生時，神的靈開始住在那個人的裡面，他們就會在基督裡活過來，並因祂的存在而有力地具有祂的品格。結果是一個改變了的人——並且正在改變——

能夠並且願意悔改。這種不斷改革以效法基督的工作在悔改和信心的生活中持續進行。這是真正的轉變。

17 因為基督差我來不是為施洗，而是為傳福音—。

保羅知道教會中有些人認為受洗是「光榮的」。

「我接受了偉大使徒保羅的洗禮！我受了彼得親自的洗禮，我在耶穌受洗的約旦河裡受了洗。太 3:13

我記得幫別人修車，他堅持要付錢給我，我說不，這是一份禮物。你能想像給你的孩子一份禮物，然後他們卻想付錢給你嗎！你覺得如何？

得到神的恩惠是需要付出代價的。它所需的成本遠遠超出你的支付能力。這是你我所沒有的完美生活的代價。這個代價已經在基督裡付清了，完美的生命隨後被放棄在十字架上，這是他所做的工作，因為你做不到。他宣稱“成了”，這樣現在所有人都可以免費得到上帝的恩惠。這是唯獨恩典的福音，一份禮物。不要添加它——因為如果你這樣做——你就偷走了它。

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基督差我來，不是要施洗，而是要傳福音，不是用人智慧的言語，免得基督的十字架失去了功效。

然後保羅談到十字架的信息——

神拯救男人和女人的方法是透過一個訊息，一個關於一個人的強而有力的信息。他繼續說： 18

因為十字架的信息對那些滅亡的人來說是愚拙的，但對我們這些得救的人來說卻是神的大能。再者，我們在 2 章 4

節又看到，我的信息和我的講道，不是用智慧和說服力的言語，而是用聖靈大能的明證， 5

叫你們的信不在於人的智慧，而在於神的大能。

請注意林前 4:20 重複出現的字「能力」x3，神的大能 v17, v18, v24, 2:4, 2:5 以上，因為神的國不是說說而已，而是能力。

還有這個力量？它可以在關於某個死在十字架上的人的信息中找到。這沒有道理，十字架的信息是愚蠢的 v18

回到耶穌福音傳播之前，問問世界上任何地方的人：“人怎樣才能蒙上帝喜悅？”你永遠不會聽到他們說上帝親自以人的身份來到這個世界，並像普通的罪犯一樣受苦。這是荒謬的，這是可笑的，這是奇怪的，這是令人憎惡的。令人震驚。這是褻瀆的。

搜尋世界上不受基督教影響的宗教，你永遠找不到這樣的想法。

搜尋以基督教為基礎的宗教，所有以聖經為基礎的邪教；摩門教、耶和華見證人、基督教、羅馬天主教、東正教、名義基督教等等，只要

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聽從他們的言辭，你就會發現這是一種無十字架的信仰。儘管它可能很微妙，但它確實存在。這是人的方式，這是魔鬼的方式，它促使人們最後絕望地向耶穌呼喊：「從十字架上下來，救你自己！」 Mr 15:30

耶穌基督的死是如此不光彩和恥辱，以至於公元六世紀以前的基督教藝術中很少描繪耶穌受難的場面。

但基督，神道成肉身，受苦的僕人，是神的道路。沒有其他的。

你只信靠他，只誇耀他？還是你仍然相信其他東西？既然如此，就懺悔吧，停止吧。

我們的方式—反對基督的方式。

保羅在向基督徒展示這一點時提出了挑戰。想像一下，一個男人站在舞台上說：「來吧，讓我們看看你，誰

是要打我嗎？ 20 智慧人在哪裡？告訴我，學者在哪裡？

OK聰明的木屐這個時代的哲學家在哪裡？

或者我們可以說理性主義者、科學家、專家現在被召喚，就像一個新的祭司階級一樣，告訴我們一切事情是怎樣的，以及應該怎樣。

就像所有那些站在海底或宇宙盡頭對新發現感到驚訝的人一樣。就像那些興奮的太空科學家一樣，他們的發現提出的問題多於他們解決的問題，然後他們又跑回來重寫他們的理論。

上帝豈不是愚弄了世人的智慧嗎？你看不到嗎？

上帝是精神，科學家如何發現精神？你用什麼儀器？

保羅在這裡提出了一個基本原則：人生活在黑暗中，沒有能力，沒有智慧，沒有悟性。人在最好的狀態下，什麼也做不了，什麼也不知道，什麼也發現不了，什麼成就也沒有，什麼都得不到。我們多麼自豪地認為我們可以，多麼自欺欺人。這就是為什麼男人不。是 66666666 (7)

上帝擁有一切力量、一切智慧和一切理解力，我們很容易相信祂沒有，但祂確實如此。我們這些認識祂的人，讓我們這麼說吧——

並以祂為榮。

兩組

6b

保羅面前有兩個主要聽眾，兩種心態：猶太人和希臘人。那些信奉猶太教的人——以及非猶太人——在觀點上是異教徒，22個猶太人要求奇蹟般的跡象——而希臘人則尋求智慧。

猶太人尋找令人驚嘆的東西。希臘人對地位印象深刻。階梯的頂端是哲學家、辯論家、辯論家、演說家。因此，我們在後啟蒙時代的世界中，尋求聰明、思考、推理。您可以在提出的論點中看到這一點。

我正在觀看穆斯林穆罕默德蓋頭和喬丹彼得森之間的辯論。一個有趣的組合。一個是穆斯林辯護者，一個是聰明的理性主義者。他們正在討論基督教。穆罕默德談到三位一體時說「這沒有意義」。他不相信，因為這對他來說毫無意義，他的思想才是真理的仲裁者。上帝在被告席上，發現自己有所欠缺。喬丹彼得森承認三位一體是基督教的正統教義，但他說，如果我可以解釋的話，「我也不明白」。

儘管用不同的相反方式表達，但這對兩人來說都是愚蠢的。

好吧，我不明白，但這就是上帝啟示自己的方式——

而且我相信這一點。但我不明白上帝如何用言語創造這個世界，或者成為一個人但仍然是上帝，或者他如何將他的主權意志與人類責任結合起來，但他可以做到，而且他做到了。

□ 這對人類的自尊心來說是多麼大的挑戰。不再自誇了。

箴言 3

章說：“這沒有道理”，“你要專心仰賴耶和華，不可倚靠自己的聰明；在你一切所行的事上都要認定他，他必指引你的路。不要自以為聰明；你們要敬畏耶和華，遠離惡事。箴 3:5-7

猶太人

22 猶太人要求神蹟，他們說「給我們留下深刻的印象」x2。約 2:18

猶太人問他說：“你能顯什麼神蹟給我們看，證明你有權柄做這一切事呢？”在馬太福音6章3

節，他們又問他：「那麼，你要顯什麼神蹟，好讓我們看見並相信你呢？你會做什麼呢？（以及太16：1-4）。請給我們留下深刻的印象！

。

這就是他們對彌賽亞的看法，並且拒絕擁有一個不強大的彌賽亞。他們想要他們的掃羅王，比其他人高出一個頭，強壯而令人印象深刻。

7a

他們對聖經有選擇性的看法，只看到他們想看到的，因此也期望看到的。

耶穌不是騎著一匹高大的阿拉伯戰馬來到耶路撒冷，而是騎著一頭驢，甚至是更小的驢駒。耶穌說：「我不是你們那樣的王」。

□

全能神的兒子不被承認並受到如此虐待，這似乎是「無稽之談」。人們期望主消滅罪，但表面上並沒有被罪消滅。（菲利普斯）

「因為十字架的信息對那些正在滅亡的人來說是愚蠢的，但對我們這些得救的人來說卻是神的大能。」1Co 1:18

這對你來說是愚蠢的，你不會接受它嗎？還是它是你救贖的力量？上帝扭轉局勢，以弱勝強。

1. 你會把錢押在大衛身上還是歌利亞身上？

2.

你會選擇多少人來對抗米甸人的大軍，你會對基甸的大部分軍隊說「回家吧」？

3.

你是否像強大的軍事將軍乃縵一樣，當他被告知去約旦河洗澡以清除麻風病時，他嘲笑了？然後勃然大怒，「那條河，那條小河，為什麼不是大河呢？不，上帝不會按照你的方式做事。乃縵改變了，他謙卑起來，並在主裡誇口。

4.

當耶穌說：「你必須重生」時，你「明白」他的意思嗎？對虔誠的尼哥底母來說，這毫無意義。

5.

你今天早上來這裡是因為想要感覺好一點嗎？就像那些吃飽了五千人卻仍願意來到耶穌面前「生命」的糧一樣！

6. 你是否像那個井邊的女人一樣，沒有意識到自己需要「活水」？

7.

猶太人有許多法律需要遵守—遵守不只是因為它們有意義，而有些法律卻沒有意義。而是要表明誰愛上帝。

7b

哥林多的基督徒很容易傾向於兩種方式之一。來自希臘背景的人說：「只有對我有意義、符合我的智慧、我的思想、我的推理和我的能力時，我才會相信。

或者他們傾向於猶太人，並認為他們對精神恩賜印象深刻。如今，教堂裡的許多人都對音樂、燈光、色彩、旗幟、建築、節目印象深刻，或是來觀看和聆聽有魅力的領袖。

保羅說 2:2

因為當我和你們在一起的時候，我立志不知道別的，只知道耶穌基督並祂釘十字架。並說：與認識我主耶穌基督的無比偉大相比，我認為一切都是損失，為了他，我已經失去了一切。我看他們為糞土，為要贏得基督腓立比書 3:8

這對人類的自尊心來說是多麼大的挑戰。你願意喜歡他，在主裡誇口嗎？

對猶太人來說，被釘在十字架上的彌賽亞是不可想像的。

21:23, 加拉。 3:13 希臘人無法理解上帝取了人形然後被處死

23

我們卻是傳釘十字架的基督，在猶太人為絆腳石，在外邦人為愚拙，這個禮物，這個生命的福音，採用普通的牛皮紙包裝。

你無法說服某人進入神的國度，你也無法說服某人進入神的國度。但是，當有人得救時，光突然亮起，傳講或說出的話語就會跳到他們面前，而大多數時候，說話的人甚至不知道他說了這句話。這是神的作為。

24

但對於神所呼召的，無論是猶太人、希臘人，基督總為神的能力，神的智慧。 21

因為世人憑著神的智慧不認識他，所以人所不能做的事，神卻做到了。上帝因所傳講的愚昧話來拯救那些相信的人而感到高興。

神選擇了愚昧的事（2:5），叫你們的信心不依靠人的智慧，只依靠神的大能。

8a

教堂

哥林多教會是克服重重困難而成立的大教會。在這樣一個無神論的城市裡竟然有聖人，這實在是太不尋常了。

所做的事都是神所做的事。因此，教會中存在著黨派精神，一種以人為本的驕傲的世俗心態，是多麼錯誤的事。

「這個世界的哲學家 and 作家有什麼智慧可以展示？」什麼都沒有。那麼，科林斯各派如何證明自己更聰明呢？真正的「正確」來自破碎的心，而不是來自大腦。

「26弟兄們，想想你們蒙召的時候是什麼樣的人。按照人類的標準，你們當中沒有多少人是明智的。有影響力的人並不多；出身貴族的人不多。

今天早上這裡不也是這樣嗎？在基督改變你的生活之前，你有想過嗎？你很重要嗎？你很有錢嗎？你們關係好嗎？你取得了什麼成就？

在當時複雜的社會中，很少哥林多基督徒是傑出的。但他們改變的生活顯示上帝如何利用愚昧、軟弱和低下的人來推翻世界的標準。大多數人都是奴隸出身低下，道德低下。

信徒的新生命完全來自神，第 30

節：“你們在耶穌基督裡是因為他，也只是因為他，他為我們從神而來的智慧，就是我們的公義、聖潔和救贖。”

神的目的是要你停止在他面前的任何自我慶幸，拋棄那種虛假的信任，停止自誇。這是對我們自尊心的挑戰。

基督徒唯一可以誇口的就是基督為我們所做的一切。

31 因此，如經上所記：“誇口的當指著主誇口。”

耶穌作為神值得並且需要你完全的信任和愛。基督的神性在保羅對耶利米書9:23

的應用中得到了證實，主如此說：「智慧人不要因他的智慧誇口，勇士不要因他的能力誇口，財主不要因他的財物誇口。耶利米書 9:23-24 阿們 _____END

8b