



Fools for Christ

1 Corinthians 4:10 -- *We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are prudent in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong, you are distinguished, but we are without honor.*

Introduction

1. It is almost not a question of whether one is a fool, but rather, what kind.
2. Christians are often mocked by the world, yet the real fool is the one who is turning away from eternal salvation and aligning to the many vain and futile ways of the world.
3. In this lesson, we will first look at the different kinds of fools there are in this world and then see what is the advantage of being the fool for Christ.

A. The Different Kinds of Fools

1. The Bible speaks of many different kinds of fools: There is the atheistic fool (Psalms 14:1), the evil-doing fool (Proverbs 13:19), the mocking fool (Proverbs 14:16), the stupid fool (Proverbs 23:9), the disobedient fool (Matthew 7:26), and the materialistic fool (Luke 12:19-20).
2. We could also study some who the world would have called fools, but who God called His own. Moses who went to face the power of the Egyptian empire armed with a rod. David who faced the giant with five smooth stones. But our purpose will be to consider being fools for Christ.

B. The Picture of the Fool for Christ

1. Paul describes himself as a fool for Christ. Is this our picture of a true leader among us? Unfortunately, no. Yet Paul said that we should imitate him. When we say we want to be fools for Christ, we are saying we want to experience these things.

1 Corinthians 4:9-13 -- *For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake ... we are weak,... we are without honor. To this present hour we are both hungry and thirsty, and are poorly clothed, and are roughly treated, and are homeless; and we toil, working with our own hands; when we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure; when we are slandered, we try to reconcile; we have become as the scum of the world, the dregs of all things...*

1 Corinthians 4:16 -- *I exhort you therefore, be imitators of me.*

2. Until we have stirred the world's wrath, we have not stirred much. The world's reaction is: "We want their mouths stopped." "We want them imprisoned."

C. The Proof of the Fool for Christ

1. Being a fool for Christ was Paul's proof of his apostleship.

2 Corinthians 11:16-28 -- *Again I say, let no one think me foolish; but if you do, receive me even as foolish, that I also may boast a little... Are they servants of Christ? I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonment, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, night and a day I have spent in the deep,... in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my country men, dangers from...*

2. A man who has determined to make himself a fool for Christ is in for a dangerous life, yet it is that very danger that is his proof of purchase. It is never comfortable to be a fool for the Lord.

John 15:19 -- *If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.*

3. You do not have to go out and get beat up, but you do have to stand up for the truth as did the apostles.
4. Another burden of proof is the internal concern for all the churches.

2 Corinthians 11:28 -- Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure upon me of concern for all the churches.

D. The Prospective of the Fool for Christ

1. How does a fool for Christ view life? He views troubles, both positive and negative, as the way to true success.

2 Corinthians 6:3-10 -- Giving no cause for offense in anything, in order that the ministry be not discredited... by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; regarded as deceivers and yet true; as unknown and yet well-known, as dying and yet behold, we live; as punished yet not put to death, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things.

2. The fool for Christ does not go looking for trouble, but he knows it will come. When a man is truly successful for Christ, the devil is going to assemble all his forces against him.

2 Corinthians 6:4-5 -- But in everything commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, in beatings, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in hunger...

E. The Program of the Fool for Christ

1. He speaks of a crucified Savior, though the world does not like to hear it. They prefer the baby Jesus or the Good Shepherd. But He died for our sins.

1 Corinthians 2:1-2 -- ...I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

2. He speaks of serving God. Not jobs, recreation, homes, children, church buildings. God must be in our lives, and He must be first.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2 -- Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

3. He speaks of serving others. We should care for those who are unable to care for themselves. He has to get rid of selfishness. He is not looking out for number one.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 -- For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more...

1 Corinthians 10:24 -- Let no man seek his own good, but that of his neighbor.

4. He speaks of subduing self. The fool for Christ has crucified all his desires. His will is the will of God.

1 Corinthians 9:26-27 -- But I buffet my body and make it my slave...

Galatians 2:20 -- I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith...

5. He strives against Satan. He is at war.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 -- For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

F. The Product of the Fool for Christ

1. Salvation for himself.

2 Corinthians 5:1-8 -- ... if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens...

2. Salvation for others.

1 Corinthians 10:32-33 -- ...just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of the many, that they may be saved.

Psalms 14:1 -- The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good.

Proverbs 13:19 -- Desire realized is sweet to the soul, but it is an abomination to fools to depart from evil.

Proverbs 14:16 -- A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, but a fool is arrogant and careless.

Proverbs 23:9 -- Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of your words.

Matthew 7:26 -- And everyone who hears these words of mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand.

Luke 12:19-20 -- And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry." But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?"