

Title: Cross conversations
Pastor: Heinrich Titus
Date: 17 March 2016
Time: 9:00am



1 Corinthians 1:10-25 ¹⁰ Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. ¹¹ For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you ¹² Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." ¹³ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name ¹⁶ Yes; I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other. ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. 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. ¹⁹ For it is written: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." ²⁰ Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. ²² For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

The Context

Acts 18:1-3 after these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth. ² And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them. ³ So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.

The Corinthian culture

1. Destroyed by Romans in 146 BC.
2. 44BC resettled by Julius Caesar.
3. Provincial capital for province of Achaia.
4. Freed slaves from Rome: Egyptians; Syrians and Jews.
5. Two ports access to trade between East and West.
6. Artisans and entrepreneurs: bronze, pottery, glass, leather (Paul and Aquila).
7. Characterised by the collegial or fraternities: own officers; parties; burial ceremonies and Rituals. Each group had a patron/sponsor and a sponsor deity that they worshipped.
8. Social mobility and prestige
9. Competitive environment in business, politics and social status. Looking good and influential was one of the most important values.

10. Artists, philosophers, actors and writers came there, for sponsorship by the rich. The more eloquent the more money sponsored and so religious groups were divided along money lines as well.

11. 26 different temples found in Corinth: Aphrodite, Athena, Apollo, Hera (goddess of marriage); Demeter (god of healing) Isis, etc. influenced business, parties, politics. The imperial cult very strong.

12. At the centre of all of these activities were the cultural importance of time spent eating and drinking as a sign of aligning oneself to the gods and strengthening connections.

Acts 18:4-11 and he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks. ⁵ When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ ⁶ But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, “Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles. ⁷ And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man named Justus, one who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. ⁸ Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized. ⁹ Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, “Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; ¹⁰ for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.” ¹¹ And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.