

Read: 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Striving to Be Foolish and Weak

1 Corinthians 1:27

God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Foolish. Weak. What do you think of when you hear these words? Do you feel like you want to be foolish and weak, or would you rather be wise and strong? That's a silly question, isn't it? You go to school every day so that you can be wise instead of foolish. You eat healthy foods and get enough sleep so that you can be strong instead of weak. Who would want to be foolish or weak if they could be wise or strong?

The apostle Paul gives us a surprising answer to that question. He says that God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise and the weak things of the world to shame the strong. Why? Why would God choose weak or foolish things when he could have something strong or wise instead? Does God actually want you to be foolish and weak? Yes...and no...

God doesn't want you to stop going to school so that you can be foolish. He doesn't want you to eat junk food all day and stay up all night so that you can be weak. He does want you to remember where your strength and wisdom come from, though.

Trying to be wise and strong on your own apart from God isn't going to get you very far. Instead, that attitude will bring you to shame sooner or later. You'll eventually run into a problem you can't solve or a task you can't tackle, a problem or a task where your own wisdom or strength just isn't good enough. But when you turn to God for your wisdom and strength, you can be confident that he's walking alongside of you and giving you everything you need to live a life of faith.

Relying on God for your wisdom and strength might make you look weak and foolish to those around you. They might say that it doesn't make sense to believe in God. Nothing could be further from the truth! Jesus must have looked foolish and weak to the world when he was hanging on the cross, but that's how he saved us. So when you appear foolish and weak to the world, when you turn to God for your wisdom and strength, you're doing exactly what God wants you to do. Without God, you have nothing. With him, you have everything!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Would you rather be foolish and weak or wise and strong?
- Who should you rely on for your strength and wisdom?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- *Agree or disagree.* God wants you to be foolish and weak.
- Why might you look foolish or weak to the world when you rely on God?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- In Philippians 4:13, the apostle Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me." Explain what he means.
- What would you say to someone who says, "It doesn't make sense to believe in God"?

Closing Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for being my wisdom when I am foolish and my strength when I am weak. Amen.