

## The Foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom

(1 Sam 17 & 1 Corinthians 1:18-30)

07-Jul-19

Begin Service with: Psalm 46:1-3

<sup>1</sup> God is our refuge and strength,  
an ever-present help in trouble.

<sup>2</sup> Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way  
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,

<sup>3</sup> though its waters roar and foam  
and the mountains quake with their surging.

### Intro

We're looking at 1 Samuel 17

There are **Bibles** in front of you and an **outline** in the bulletin if you like to take notes.

Let's pray...

*[Family Service: - The world - and by that, I mean those who don't' believe in God and His Son, Jesus - see it as foolish of us, as Christians, to put our faith and trust in God and His Son, Jesus.*

*They see our faith as nothing more than a crutch - holding us up.*

*The world would rather believe in themselves and believe that they are in control of their lives - and that they can do whatever they want - and achieve whatever they want - without God in their lives*

*But the Bible says: in Psalm 14:1*

**[PowerPoint 1-Psalm 14:1]**

*The fool says in his heart "There is no God."]*

*[Café Church Illustration: There's the story of an Atheist who took Christians and Jews to court complaining that they all had days to celebrate their religion on the calendar like Easter, Christmas, Passover and Hanukah but there was no day put aside on the calendar for Atheists to celebrate*

*The Judge pondered the case for a while and made his decision by reading Psalm 14:1 - The fool says in his heart "There is no God."*

**[PowerPoint 1-Psalm 14:1]**

*So, the judge ruled there was a date on the calendar for Atheist's to celebrate - it is **April Fools' Day!***

Some people might find Psalm 14:1 offensive

Because the Psalm is saying only a fool wouldn't believe in God

But God's Word is offensive - because it challenges **wrong thinking** and challenges **wrong behaviour**

A certain **footballer**, very much in the news at the moment, has **caused offense** by simply quoting a Bible verse

But the bottom line is it's actually foolish to ignore God's Word and it's foolishness to ignore God.

Speaking of foolish

In our OT Bible passage from 1 Samuel 17, today - there seems to be a lot of foolishness floating around....

### **Context - Foolish Israelites**

But before we get there,

[PowerPoint 2-Heading/Context]

Let's look at the *context* and *background* of our passage:

- The people of Israel, the Israelites, had foolishly asked for a "King like the other nations"

[PowerPoint 2a-Context]

- But they already have a King - His name is God!
- And, God is not necessarily against the idea of them having a King
- But the King must be a Godly King - a King with a heart for God
- Israel's first King, King Saul, was very foolish and continually disobeyed God - and did not have a heart for God - but a heart only for himself
- So, God withdrew from Saul - and Saul foolishly continued without a close personal relationship with God
- And as we pick up the story, Israel is now facing war against their arch enemy - the Philistines
- And the King that Israel foolishly asked God for - is a broken and frightened man

Which bring us to the amazing *story of David and Goliath*

Probably one of the most famous stories in the Bible - and we've heard the story many times, I'm sure

But what I'd like to focus on today - is actually a statement from our NT reading - from 1 Corinthians 1:25 - where the Apostle Paul says:

[PowerPoint 3a-1 Cor 1:25]

For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom

What Paul means by that is - if it were possible for God to be foolish (which it's not because He knows everything) - but if it were possible for God to be foolish - His foolishness would still be smarter and wiser than any human wisdom.

[PowerPoint 3b-Isaiah 55:8]

Remember - Isaiah 55:8 says - "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.

So, when it appears God is being foolish - it's actually because we don't understand His plan or His ways - and in fact it's us humans who are being foolish

So, from our OT story of David and Goliath

**David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17:1-58)**

There's foolish Saul

[PowerPoint 4a-Heading/Foolish Saul]

**Foolish Saul**

This story of David and Goliath

[PowerPoint 4b-Foolish Saul]

- It's very embarrassing for Saul
- He and his army are very afraid

- Think about it - Saul is the King - and the leader of the army
- When he was chosen as King - he was described as being a head taller than anyone else (1 Samuel 9:2)
- As the soldiers look around - to see who will fight Goliath - they'll see one person whose head and shoulders above everyone else - that's Saul - he should be the one going out to fight against Goliath but he's just as scared as everyone else
- Saul's also foolish in underestimating the power of God and he's foolish in giving up on God
- Remember when Saul was made King - God said Saul's mission was to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines (9:16) - AND - God promised to be with Saul and help him (10:7)
- Saul foolishly forgot all of that and failed to trust God

Foolish Saul!

Then there's foolish Goliath

[PowerPoint 5a-Heading/Goliath]

### Foolish Goliath

- Goliath comes out parading himself as a champion

[PowerPoint 5b-Goliath]

- Goliath is not just defying the army of Israel but he is foolishly defying the God of Israel's army - and God won't stand for that
- Goliath foolishly underestimates God's power
- And he foolishly underestimates David - thinking a boy can't possible take on a man

- Goliath relies on his strength - and his vital statistics
  - Goliath is 9'9" or 3 metres tall **[See Pink Sticker on wall]**
  - His armour alone weights 58KG
  - His spearpoint on his javelin weights 6.9KG
- When I played rugby my coach always told me "*the bigger they are the harder they fall*"
- Goliath foolishly used his Philistine "gods" to curse David - but what Goliath is actually doing is blaspheming Israel's God - the one True God

Foolish Goliath!

**(pause)**

Which brings us to foolish David - question mark?

**[PowerPoint 6-Heading/David]**

**Foolish David?**

- In human terms - David is foolish to fight Goliath

**[PowerPoint 6b-David]**

- He can't possibly win - can he?
- David can't even wear Saul's armour to protect him - it's too big and too heavy and too uncomfortable to wear
- But David has God's armour (Ephesians 6) - and so do we!
- And it turns out - David is not foolish at all
- His confidence is in God - See v37
- **The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine**
- You see those years as a shepherd boy - were God's training ground for David - God gave David great skills to defend himself and his sheep -

David learnt all about God - he learnt to trust God and to rely on God's power and protection

- As David went out to fight Goliath
- He realizes something really important
- See v45-46
- David says to Goliath "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head"...
- David has *God fighting for him*
- It's not Goliath versus David - it's Goliath and his false gods versus the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel - the one True God
- We need to remember that too - in our battles in life
- We have a secret weapon - called God

**(pause)**

In our Bible Studies - we always ask the question - how does the OT passage relate to Jesus

Well when we look at our NT passage 1 Cor 1:18-30

We pick up this same idea of foolishness again

[Please turn to 1 Cor 1:18-30]

This passage talks about foolish Jesus - question mark?

[PowerPoint 7a-Heading/Foolish Jesus]

## Foolish Jesus? (1 Corinthians 1:18-30)

### [PowerPoint 7b-Foolish Jesus]

And V18 - says the message of Jesus dying on the cross **appears foolish to people who don't believe**. As we said earlier, people who don't believe in Jesus, think we're foolish for believing in Him - and that we're foolishly putting our trust in something false - even crazy?

**Even** Jesus' immediate **family** thought he had lost his mind (Mark 3:21)

They **didn't get** that He was **sent by the Father** to die on the cross for the forgiveness of sins

They just thought He was on a **crazy suicide mission** - upsetting the religious leaders and the Romans and getting Himself into a whole lot of bother.

They saw this as foolishness

Foolish Jesus!

But God's ways are not our ways - and God's ways are always better!

The Apostle Paul's argument in this passage, is that human wisdom is nothing to match God's wisdom

Paul says the Gospel - the Good News that **Jesus had to die on a cross** to save people from the punishment of their sins - seems foolish to the world - because they **don't expect the hero of the story to die** - that doesn't fit the profile.

And Paul says the **Jews didn't get Jesus** - because they were too busy looking for more miraculous signs instead of seeing what was staring them in the face.

The Jews were too busy looking for someone to save them from the Romans by sword and spear - but as David said to Goliath - **God does not save by sword and spear** (v47). God's way is different - **God saves people by sacrificing His**

**Son Jesus** - and letting Him take our punishment for our sin - to bring people back to God by believing in Jesus.

And Paul says even the non-Jews, the **Greeks** don't get it - they're too busy having philosophical wisdom **debates about false gods** - that they don't see what the one true God has done in sending Jesus. Sounds a bit like a lot of people today - doesn't it?

**God's rescue plan is staring everyone in the face** - but most of the world rejects Jesus - because they see it as foolish nonsense

In the **same way** that it seems **foolish for David to fight Goliath** - many today see it **foolish that God would send His Son to die** for the sin of the world and give people an opportunity to be right with God and go to Heaven

But as we've just seen, David's fight with Goliath was not foolish at all - it was all **part of God's plan**

And in the same way, the Good News of Jesus death and resurrection - is not foolish either - it's all **part of God's rescue plan**

So, 3 take home applications for us today

[PowerPoint 8-Application Heading]

### Applications

[PowerPoint 8a-App1]

1. **Don't underestimate the power of the Living God** - nothing is impossible for Him. His ways are not like our ways - His wisdom is not like our wisdom

- His thoughts and plans are not like ours - they are always way better  
 - and He will always achieve His purposes. God always wins - so make sure you're on the winning side. Remember God promises that when His Word goes out it never returns to Him empty - it always achieves His purposes (Isaiah 55:11)

### [PowerPoint 8b-App2]

2. ***It is never foolish to Trust God*** - his foolishness (if He was foolish - which He's not). His foolishness is still way way better than the greatest human wisdom. God uses the weak, the lowly and despised things of this world, to achieve His purposes. For example

- God used Moses the stutterer to lead the Israelites
- God used David the little shepherd boy to defeat the Giant
- God used Rahab the prostitute to help God's people
- God used Esther the orphan girl to save the Israelites from extinction
- God used Peter the fisherman to build Jesus' church
- And even today, God is using Israel Folau, the footballer to stand up against the giants of Rugby Australia and Qantas
- And God's using each one of us to achieve his purposes.

Jesus' death on the cross might seem foolish to the world - but His death purchased forgiveness and His resurrection purchased Heaven

### [PowerPoint 3c-App3]

3. ***Through one man, actually one boy*** - David - foolish Saul and foolish Israel was rescued from being wiped out. In a far far greater way,

through one man, Jesus - foolish humankind was rescued from the punishment of sin - which is death - and given the free gift - of grace - of forgiveness and eternal life.

## Conclusion

### [PowerPoint 9-Conclusion Heading]

So, to finish up then

At church here today, there are **2 groups** of people

### [PowerPoint 9a-Group 1]

The **first group** here today, are those who have already put their faith in Jesus - I say to those people - don't underestimate how God can use you in your life to achieve His purposes. God began a work in David - when he was a shepherd boy preparing him for the day, he would face Goliath

So, I say to you - as the Apostle Paul says in Phil 1:6

God is the one who began this good work in you, and I am certain that he won't stop before it is complete on the day that Christ Jesus returns.

We're living in interesting times, here in Australia - with religious freedom under threat - God is working in us and we have the opportunity to stand up and be bold about our faith in Jesus and the truth in God's Word. It might mean taking on so called giants - but we have the living God on our side.

### [PowerPoint 9b-Group 2]

The **second group** here today, are those who haven't already put their faith in Jesus. Perhaps you're here today and still not sure about Jesus - you might

think that believing in someone dying on a wooden cross is foolish - or it's a crutch to hold people up - or it just seems all too simple to be true. To those people I say - it's actually foolish to have the opportunity to have a life of loving God, loving Jesus and loving others and to have that opportunity and throw it away. And it's actually foolish to have the opportunity to live in a better place forever with God, when you die - a place where there are no more tears, no more death, or mourning or crying or pain or suffering (Rev 21:4) and to throw that opportunity away. It would be very foolish to throw that opportunity away and end up separated from God forever.

*[Family Service: If you're someone in that 2<sup>nd</sup> group - please come and talk to me after the service - Let's pray]*

*[If you're someone in that 2<sup>nd</sup> group here this evening - tonight's a great time to hand your life over to Jesus - I'm going to pray a prayer - and you can say it to yourself as I pray it - and you can talk to me after the service]*

### ***New Believers prayer - Café Church***

*Dear Lord Jesus,*

*I know that I am a sinner,  
and I ask for Your forgiveness.*

*I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead.*

*I turn from my sins this day*

*and invite You to come into my heart and life.*

*I want to trust and follow You as my Lord and Saviour.*

*In Your Precious Name.*

*Amen.]*

**Finish Service with:**

Ephesians 3:20-21

<sup>20</sup> Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, <sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.