

Lent 3

March 11, 2012

Text: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Theme: "Praise God for His Foolishness!"

Remember the Kool-Aid Man? He was a giant pitcher of Kool-Aid who came crashing through the wall and yelled "Hey Kool-Aid!" That was foolish. What a ridiculous idea. I mean first of all, it's not like anyone would be happy that a stupid giant pitcher of Kool-Aid just ruined your living room wall. And second, he would terrify children! No child wants giant kitchen implements to run into their houses! But he sticks with you doesn't he? You may not know of whom I'm speaking if I say Hermann Sasse or Martin Chemnitz, both amazing, historic Lutheran Theologians, but everyone here knows the Kool-Aid Man!

We struggle in life to understand what is wise and what is foolish and then once we think we know, we struggle to focus ourselves on the wise but too often, we become completely distracted by the Kool-Aid Man crashing through our wall. Yet, it really is not as complex as we like to make it. That which is of God is wise. That which is un-godly is foolishness, but then we begin to argue over whether something is of God or not.

He did not leave us without resources. It's not as though he said, "ya'll be good now!" and walked away. He gave us the 10

Commandments. Those 10 Commandments are a consummate owner's manual to life. Every situation in life can be run through those commandments and immediately you know what is wise and what is foolish. Obviously it takes a little work because we have to find common denominators. Remember when you were learning how to add fractions and you had to add $1/5 + 1/3$ and you just stared at the math paper praying the Jesus would come and end all the torture? Then you learned that 15 was a common denominator and $1/5$ was the same as $3/15$. $1/3$ was the same as $5/15$ and presto change, you had the answer: $8/15$! That common denominator made all the difference.

So we can take any modern quandary and look for the things it has in common with the Scriptures, particularly the 10 Commandments and soon we will have our answer. We sometimes don't like our answer, but we have it nevertheless. For instance, listen to the uproar going on over birth control methods. Clearly the morning after pill was not an issue for Moses. But, what is the common denominator? Life right? Is it okay for individual human beings to take a life when they want to? No. Never. Exodus 20:13,

"You shall not murder." When do we be come alive? Psalm 139:16,

“Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.” So clearly God recognized us as a being when we were an unformed substance. Psalm 51:5,

“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” If we can be sinful at conception then we are alive at conception. So there you have it. The morning after pill destroys life after conception and is therefore murder. See? It really is not that hard to tell the difference between wisdom and foolishness. But then comes the Kool-Aid Man crashing through the walls of our lives saying,

“Hey now! Hold on there a minute! The ancient Hebrew didn’t understand the intricacies of science and when life began and besides that, the morning after pill wasn’t even a thought so they couldn’t have addressed that and besides that maybe it is better for everyone if a baby is just never born and besides that...!” And we find ourselves starting to nod and say, yes, that does sound wise. Maybe God is foolish. Don’t trust the Kool-Aid Man. Just like the substance he holds, he is artificial and detrimental to your health. He lies!

All the little struggles we have with God's wisdom which seems so foolish to us is magnified at the cross. Why would God sacrifice his one and only son for us? What about us is lovable enough to do such a thing? We know us. So it is hard for us to imagine loving us enough to sacrifice anything for us. That's why the cross is folly, foolishness. The English word that comes from that Greek word is moronic. It is moronic to our human nature and yet it is the power of God. It is explosive. It turns everything we thought we knew upside down and turns out to be the true wisdom.

That wisdom changes hearts. If you want someone to believe, telling him the rules will NOT help. We like rules because then we have something to bend and elude! If you want someone to believe, be a moron. Be foolish for Christ with the foolishness of Christ. Proclaim the Gospel which is that whatever rules you keep or break, God loves you. The creator of this world loves you so much that he is willing to go to any extreme for you. What? You don't believe in him? That's okay. He still loves you.

Sometimes my kids love me and sometimes they rue the day I was made their father but I always love them, wholly and completely and I would do whatever I had to do for them to keep them safe and provide for them. Their behavior never changes my complete love for them. I'm guess all parents feel the same way.

We got that from God. That is how he is with us. He loves us whether we keep the 10 Commandments or break the 10 Commandments.

The Ticarics own Central Service and Repair and both Nic and Mike suggest that I change the oil in my car every 3,000 miles. But you know what? When I let it go until 4,000 miles or even 4,500, they don't send me hate mail or make threatening phone calls. If I chose never to have my oil changed again, they would not transfer their membership and refuse to speak to me. They know that it is good for my car and therefore good for me to change the oil every 3,000 miles but in the end, it is up to me to either care for my car or let it fall apart. God is the same way with my life. He loves me regardless of how well I take care of my life.

What a foolish God we have to love us and care for us no matter what. What a foolish God we have to send his son to die for us when we often don't even try to keep ten simple rules. Praise God for his foolishness because therein lies his amazing power to change us from sin-minded spawn of Satan to his glorious children who will inherit paradise.