

# Are You Foolish?

By R.T. Nusbaum

Jesus exhorts us to call no man a fool. It is a very frightening word to us. Yet, God comes and requires by saying, "Thou fool"! Paul even used the word fool: "Are you so foolish?" (Gal.3:3)

Then the Holy Spirit through Paul proceeds to ask another question: "Having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh?" In these scriptures the Spirit seems to be tying the concept of foolishness to the activity of the flesh. Why would the activity of the flesh be considered "foolish" to God? Because the Bible clearly declares that "the flesh cannot please God!" (Gal.3:1-14; Rom.8:8).

Of course, when you speak of "the flesh" in most Christian circles, you are talking about the doing of ungodly and sinful acts. Since that is the basic definition of the flesh then the doing of "good deeds" would be considered to not be doing acts of the flesh. But to God, the flesh is defined in completely different terms. To Him, any work whether for good or evil that is accomplished by human effort and means is considered "the flesh".

Jesus made this statement, "The flesh profits nothing." (Jn.6: 63). He didn't say that it profits very little – He said it profits nothing! Now, don't you think it would be very foolish to proceed on a basis with God when He Himself has completely rejected that basis? But too many Christians are living as fools, for they ignorant of what "living by the flesh" really means TO GOD.

When Jesus came to this earth He said, "I do nothing of Myself" (Jn.8:28). He didn't proceed on this basis because He feared sinning. He was the Son of God and was not concerned about sin. His greatest concern was to live by the life of the Father and to express His life through Himself into the earth (John 17; Heb. 1:1-4).

Jesus didn't view the Father as some sort of a tool to help Him do what was needed. However, there are those who only see Jesus as a helper. They want His help while refusing His Spirit and nature within. God's Word describes this as making, "a fair shew in the flesh." But, to God this is not true Christianity but foolishness. It is a valueless and worthless exercise in trying to make the flesh acceptable to God. (Gal.6:12; Tit.1:16). It is the flesh at work for God but it is not Christ. The writer of the Book of Hebrews encourages you to "Cease from your works." (Heb.4:10). The great victory that God wants accomplished in man is "That his deeds might be shown to be wrought by God." (Jn.3:21).

Too many believers today are living their Christian life for God instead of allowing Christ to live in them. They have foolishly ignored the fact that it is God who is to work in us, "both to will and to do those things that please Him," not us ourselves! (Eph.2:8,9; Phil.2:13). Jesus put it this way, "In vain do they worship Me, teaching . . . the commandments of men" ( Mt. 15:8,9). What God requires cannot be accomplished by keeping commandments but by allowing the life of the Vine to flow through the branches (John 15). The true and only Christian life, is His resurrection life in us!

Most Christians want to be like Jesus. This is noble. But how we set about accomplishing this is all important. God's plan is not simply that we copy Jesus' action but that Christ literally be formed in us (Gal. 4:19; Rom. 8:27). We may be seeking to be like Him but are we carrying it out in our abilities. The great need today is not for more Christ-likeness but for more of Christ (John 3:30). Jesus says, "If you believe not that I AM, you shall die in your sins." (Jn.8:24). Most believe more in the "I Give" than they do in the "I AM".. They concentrate more on Him in relation to their needs than they do in relation to Him living in them.

How long will we live as foolish people? How long will we try to be made perfect by the flesh? Paul asks, "Are you made perfect by the flesh?" He shows that his method of proceeding has nothing to do with his own accomplishments by saying, "Not having mine own righteousness, but. . . the righteousness of God!" (Phil.3:9). Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me." We are to give up all of our doing for God, and allow Jesus to live in us. We are to be no longer foolish but wise. \*\*\*