

# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

Study to show "The Way of True life,"

## *Bible Study Outline*

**TOPIC:** Finding Power in Weakness

**TEXT:** 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

**Instructions:** - *Let the above passages be read each time you come together to study this topic so that everyone could participate fully. The teacher should provide additional background information on the topic and come up with follow-up questions. Participants should be brief in their responses and use relevant Bible references to illustrate their points. They should be careful not to dominate the discussion to allow everyone to have an equal opportunity to participate.*

**Introduction:** We see thirst for power everywhere—in politics and public life, in civil conflict and the resort to arms, in big business and industry, in the professions in which professional expertise threatens those without it, and in primitive societies in which the spiritualist or witch doctor trades secret power for money. Unfortunately, we see the same power-hunger in the church: in top-level ecclesiastical power struggles, in denominational disputes, in parachurch organizations that dream of expanding into world empires, in some local churches driven by market forces and others in which the clergy hold all the reins of power and refuse to share it with the laypeople (especially the youth), and even in the pulpit, which is an exceedingly dangerous place for any child of Adam to occupy. God's picture of power is not what many of us would paint for ourselves. Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Power! It is more intoxicating than alcohol, more addictive than drugs. In what settings do you find a wrong use of power most tempting? Why is power attractive to so many people? Discuss.
2. What words and ideas do you find paired in this passage that most people would not put together? What questions does this passage raise in your mind?

3. Focus more carefully on verses 18-19. Paul speaks of two different groups of people. Describe each. (What is happening for each group? Why? What seems to be the dividing point?)

4. Reread verses 20-21. How is God's view of wisdom and foolishness different from the ordinary use and understanding of those words?

5. Verses 22-24 speak of three different demonstrations of power. What is appealing or distasteful about each?

6. A crucified Messiah was a contradiction in terms. To Jewish minds, it united two opposite concepts. Messiah meant power and triumph. Crucifixion meant weakness, humiliation, defeat. How would you try to explain to a Jew of the New Testament era what Paul might mean by the power of the weakness of the cross?

7. What do you think a Christian leader would look like today if he or she exercised the kind of power found in the weakness of the cross?

8. Paul told the Corinthians, "God was pleased. . . to save those who believe. . . whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks" (vs. 21, 24). What does this suggest to you about God's power? Discuss.

9. Select one area where Christians are most likely to be tempted to abuse power: home, workplace, neighborhood, school, church, marriage, parenting. Describe how they could begin to live out the power of the weakness of the cross in that setting?