

*“ For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified...”*

I once knew a man who was into “signs from God”. We’ll call him Jerry. Jerry told me once that he was really unhappy with his job. I asked him why he didn’t look for another one. Here’s what he said:

“You believe in God—so you’ll get this. I am looking for a sign from God that He wants me to look.”

“What kind of sign?” I asked.

“Oh—I wouldn’t ask God to do anything specific. That’s not right. But I’ll know it when I see it.”

“OK”—I said, trying not to let my face show any skepticism. “Is there any time limit?”

“Oh—I wouldn’t put limits like that on God!”

“So the sign could be anything. Come at anytime. How about the way your boss dismissed everything you said at the meeting this morning. Was that the sign, do you think?” Jerry thought for a bit.

“Nah. I think that’s just the way he always treats me. No. I’ll know it when I see it.”

*Some demand signs.*

Sometimes when I'm really unsure I look for signs, too.

Or sometimes- I look for proof. Proof that God is there for us. Proof that everything we are living through has ultimate meaning.

There are those who need to know the answers to all the “why’s” before they will believe Jesus’ message.

- Why does evil still exist?
- Why does God allow good people, and children to die?
- Who and what is God?

Sometimes all the knowledge we amass cannot answer all the questions we have. And there’s a big difference between knowing God, and knowing about God.

So what do we do?

We preach Christ crucified. We preach humanity’s need to put unrestricted love to death.

Christ was crucified because love was the only way. Taking power by force wasn’t the way. Living without love wasn’t the way.

Jesus showed us that it’s not whether we believe enough, or understand enough that matters: it’s whether we love each other enough.

It’s hard to be love in the world if our eyes are searching for signs, rather than searching for Christ in each other.

And all the wisdom in the world is useless if it doesn’t teach us how to reach out our hands to each other.

And we change the world with what the world calls weakness: love. Many still think that love is weak. Love is too easy.

Of course it isn't easy. Following Jesus' life and example of loving-kindness to all, healing the sick, and building a kingdom of justice for every being on earth isn't the least bit easy. If we had long ago followed in Jesus' steps, the world would long ago have been transformed.

It's always been up to us. God intended it that way. God won't change the world for us. God changes us for the world.

Let us proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to people looking for signs, and foolishness to those who swear by their own wisdom and understanding-- but to those who are called to follow Jesus-- Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. Amen.