

A STUDY OF 1 CORINTHIANS

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5

THE WISDOM OF THE CROSS

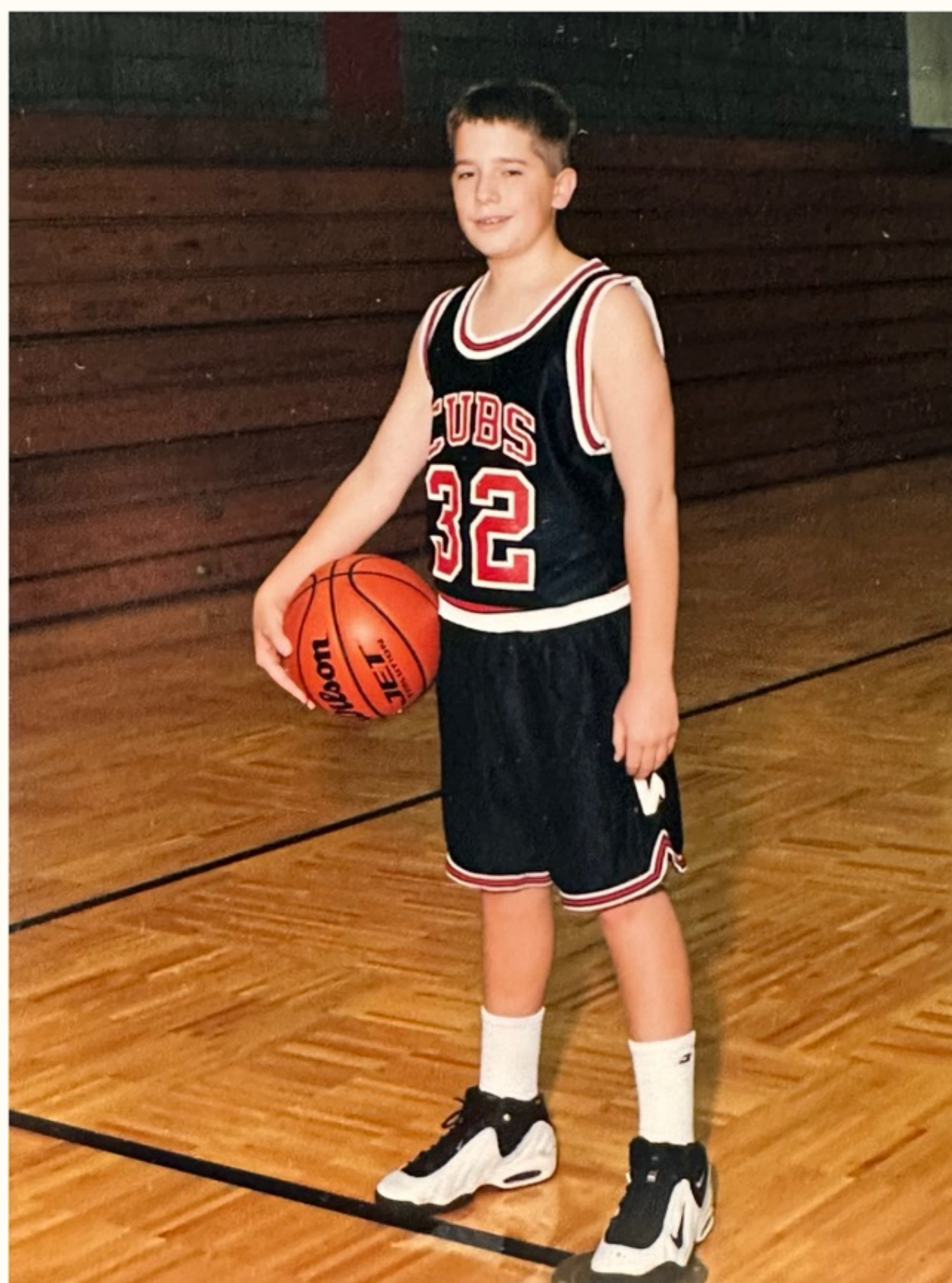




THE WISDOM OF THE CROSS

The Problem of 'Choice'
The Pride of 'Chosen'
The Power of the Cross





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1 Corinthians 1:18-20 ^{NIV}

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written:

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;
the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.”

²⁰ Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5

For the message of the cross is **foolishness** to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.¹⁹ For it is written: “I will destroy the **wisdom** of the **wise**; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.”

²⁰ Where is the **wise** person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the **wisdom** of the world?

²¹ For since in the **wisdom** of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the **foolishness** of what was preached to save those who believe.²² Jews demand signs and Greeks look for **wisdom**,²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and **foolishness** to Gentiles,²⁴ but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the **wisdom** of God.²⁵ For the **foolishness** of God is **wiser** than human **wisdom**, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

²⁶ Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were **wise** by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.

²⁷ But God chose the **foolish** things of the world to shame the **wise**; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.²⁸ God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are,²⁹ so that no one may boast before him.³⁰ It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us **wisdom** from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.³¹ Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”

2:1 And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human **wisdom** as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God.² For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.³ I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling.⁴ My message and my preaching were not with **wise** and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power,⁵ so that your faith might not rest on human **wisdom**, but on God’s power.

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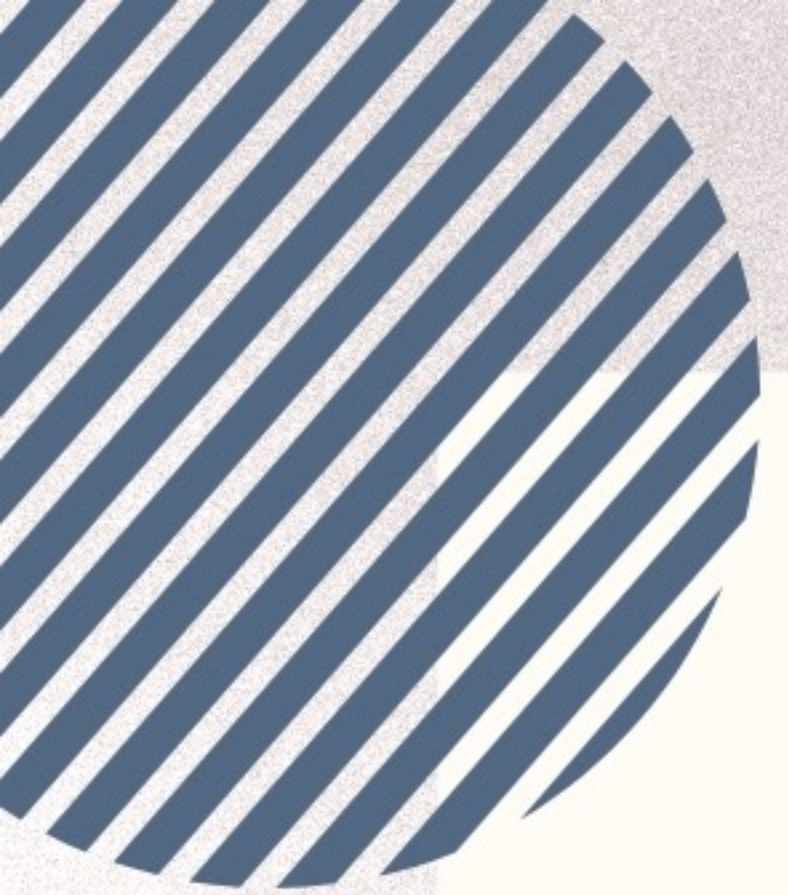
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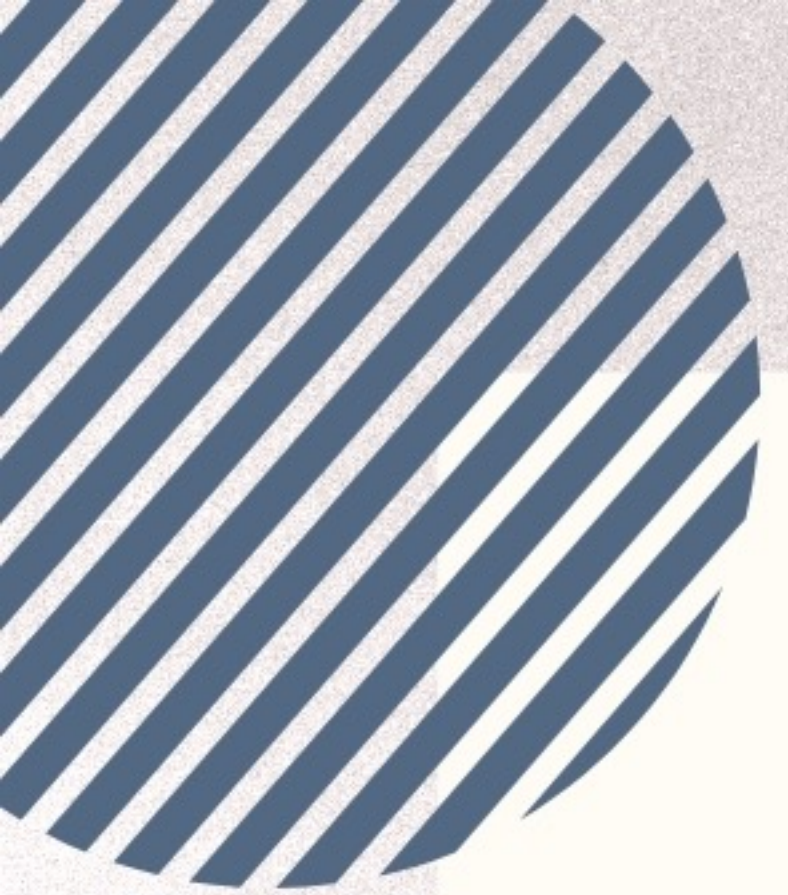
1 Corinthians 2:1, 4a ^{NIV}

And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God...⁴ My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words...



Wisdom without eloquence is like a flower without
fragrance...Nothing can penetrate to the emotions that
stumbles at the portal of the ear.

QUINTILIAN



If wisdom is present as the moderator of all things, then those who have attained it gain glory, honor, and prestige from it.

CICERO

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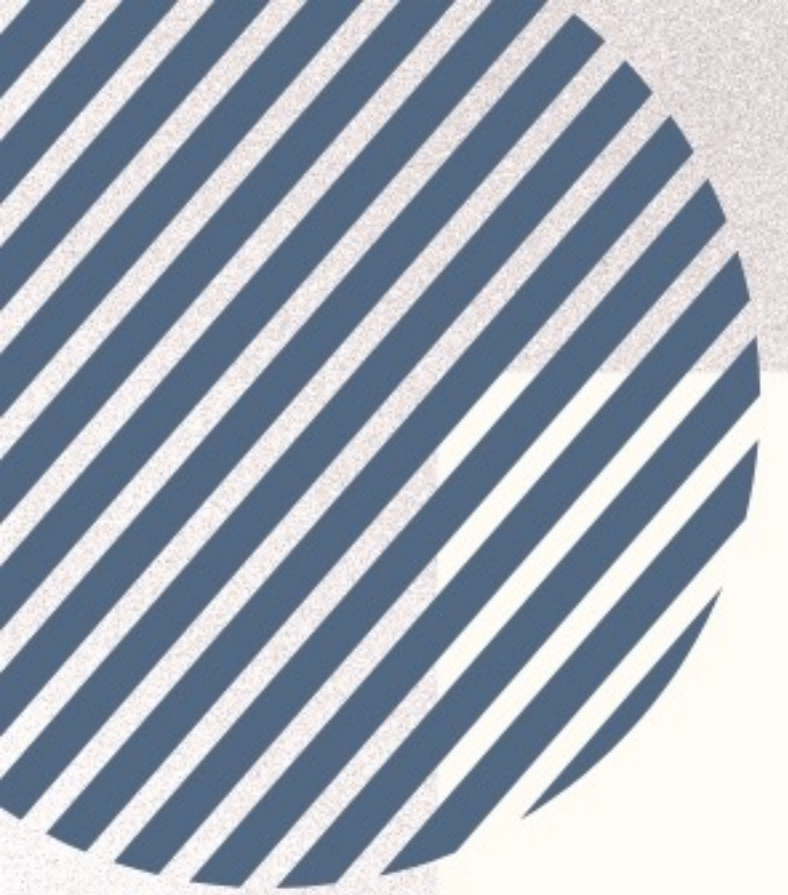
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1 Corinthians 1:26 ^{NIV}

Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.



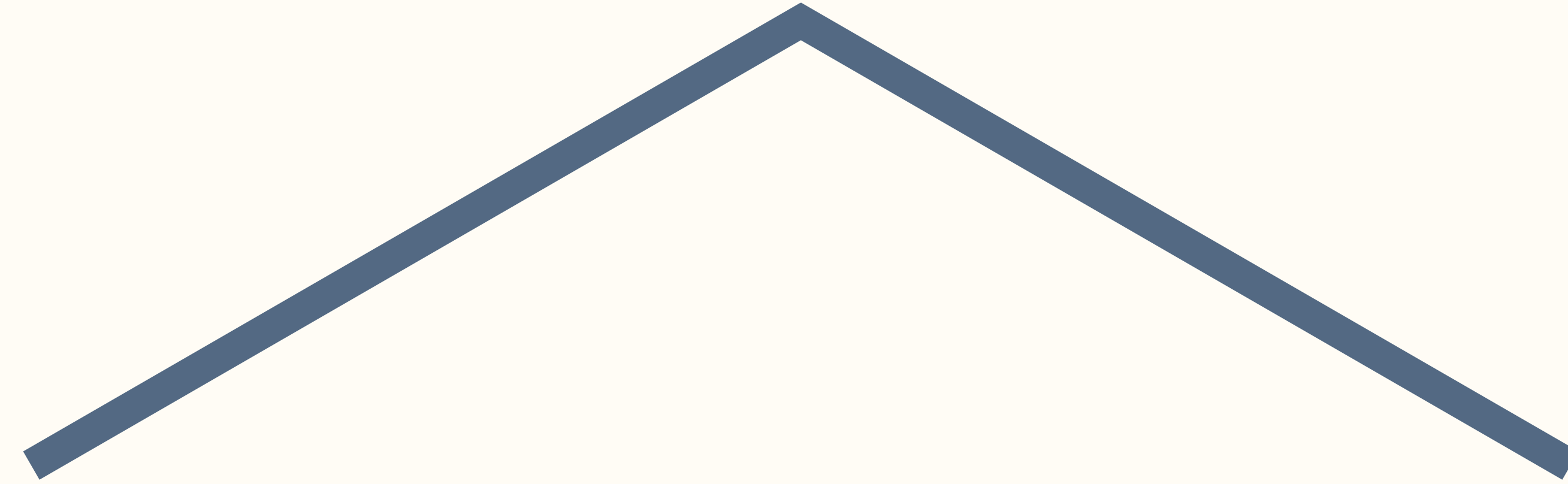
Corinth was a city where public boasting and self-promotion had become an art form. The Corinthian people thus lived within an honor-shame cultural orientation, where public recognition was often more important than facts and where the worst thing that could happen was for one's reputation to be publicly tarnished. In such a culture a person's sense of worth is based on recognition by others of one's accomplishments, hence the self-promoting public inscriptions.

BEN WITHERINGTON III

CHOICE

PRIDE

PITY



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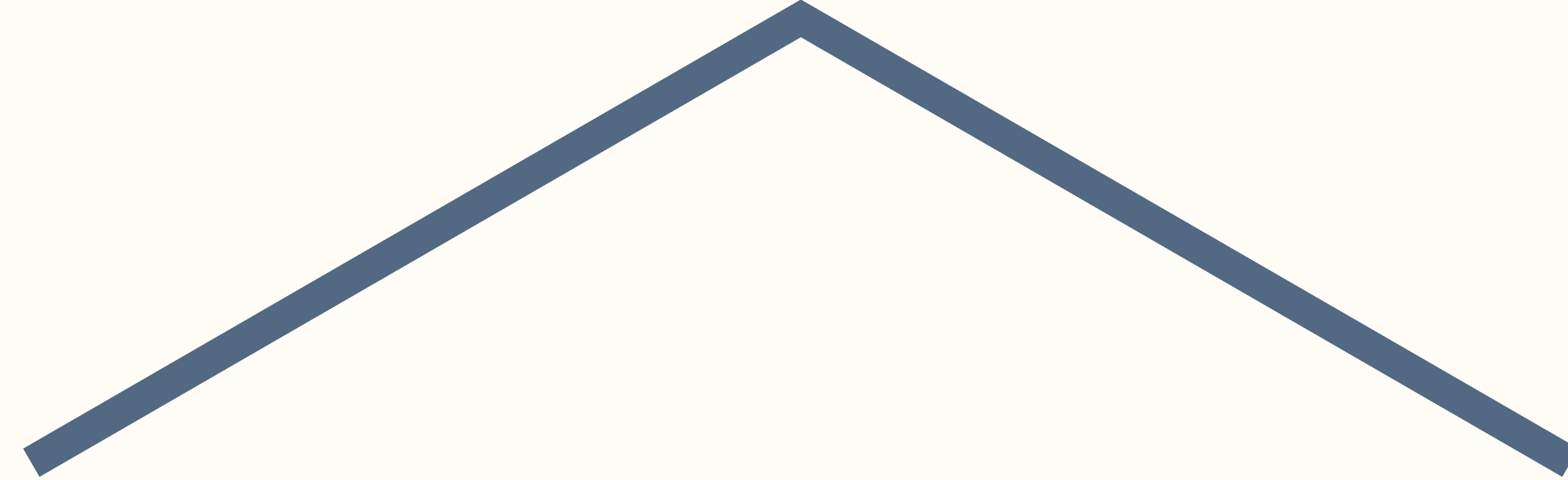
1 Corinthians 1:22-23 ^{NIV}

Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles...

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1 Corinthians 1:27-29 ^{NIV}

But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸ God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, ²⁹ so that no one may boast before him.

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God chose the weak things of the world
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God chose the lowly things of this world
and the despised things—
and the things that are not—
to nullify the things that are,

so that no one may boast before him.

CHOICE



CHOSEN

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1 Corinthians 1:30 ^{NIV}

It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

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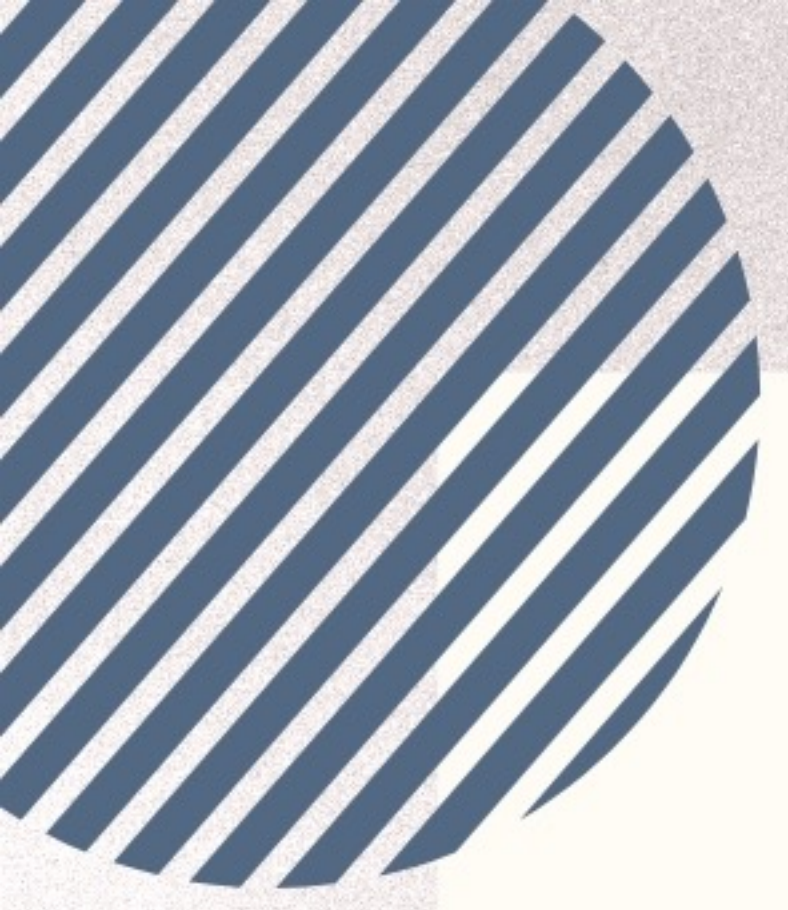
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1 Corinthians 1:31 ^{NIV}

Therefore, as it is written: "Let the one who boasts
boast in the Lord."

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1 Corinthians 2:1-4a ^{NIV}

And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. ² For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³ I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. ⁴ My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words...

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1 Corinthians 1:18 ^{NIV}

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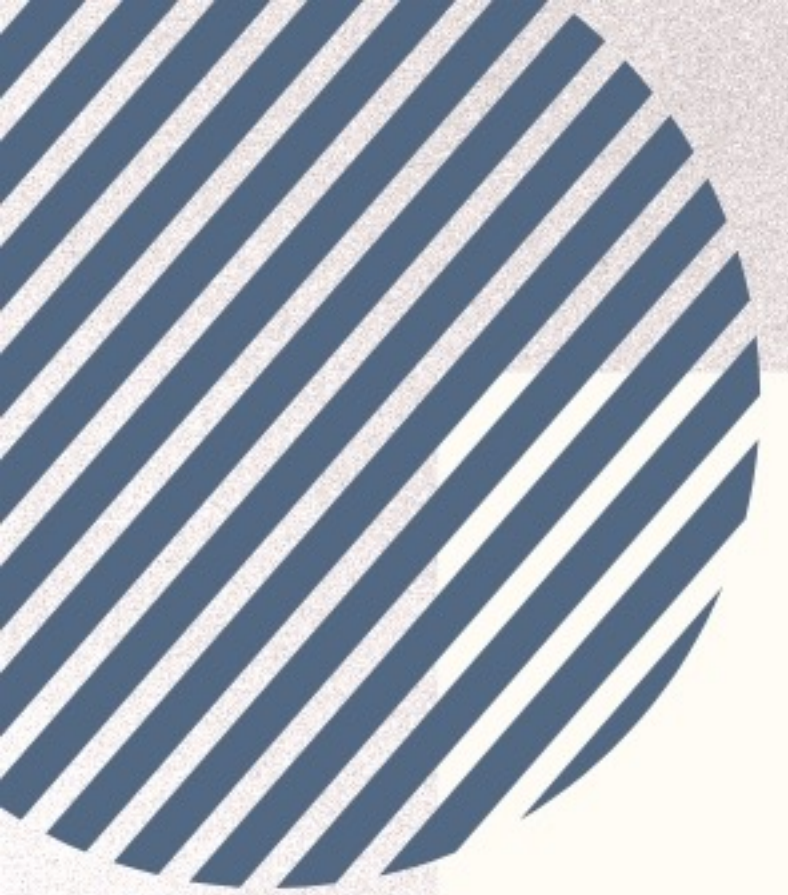
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1 Corinthians 1:18, 23; 2:2 ^{NIV}

For the **message of the cross** is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

²³ but we preach **Christ crucified**: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles...

² For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus **Christ and him crucified**.



In Paul's theology the cross is more than (but not less than) a remedy and atonement for past sins. It provides the basis for Christian identity and his transformative power to reshape Christian existence in the present and the future.

ANTHONY THISELTON

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1 Corinthians 1:18, 23-24; 2:4-5 ^{NIV}

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²³ ...but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the **power of God** and the wisdom of God.

⁴ My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the **Spirit's power**, ⁵ so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on **God's power**.