

# The Same Old Jews and Greeks

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In 1 Corinthians 1:22 Paul describes the prevailing characteristics of the Jews and Greeks of his day: “Seeing that Jews ask for **signs**, and Greeks seek after **wisdom**.” The Jews told the Lord, “Teacher, we would see a sign from thee” (Mat. 12:38; 16:1). They prized the many wonders God had done among them through a glorious history, but when the Messiah came, they would not accept His signs (Mat. 12:24).

The Greeks were especially notorious for their insatiable thirst for philosophy and knowledge. Worldly wisdom, education, and oratory were gods at whose shrines they bowed low. The Athenians, whose vocation was “either to tell or to hear some new thing” (Acts 17:21), were typical of the race. But it is likely that Paul uses “Greek” to refer to all non-Jews. The Gentile world had long ago abandoned God and was vainly groping in the arid regions of human “wisdom” (Rom. 1:18–32).

There have always been these two attitudes in men. Presently, there are those who require a miraculous proof of their relationship with God. It is not enough for such that we have the complete Word of God (confirmed by the signs of Christ and his apostles (Heb. 2: 3–4), able to make us complete unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:16–17), they must seek “baptism in the Holy Spirit” or “tongues” or a “revelation,” or at least something more exciting than merely the “plain old” Gospel plan of salvation.

There is an abundance of the “Greek” mentality extant, also. Not content to speak in five understandable words rather than the 10,000 that make no sense (1 Cor. 14:19), the craze to appear intellectual has infected not a few in the church. Consider the following: “Christianity, as grounded on a past event and its interpretation, has generally held that in some way the original Christological assertions by the church have a normative value for Christianity in any era” (Dr. Royce Clark, *Pepperdine News*, May 1973). If the author believes that the New Testament is a pattern for the church in every age, why didn't he say so, instead of tiptoeing around it in such sophisticated terms?

Yes, we still have the same old Jews and Greeks with us. How much better simply to “preach Christ crucified” (1 Cor. 1:23).

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in the October 7, 1976, edition of *Granbury Gospel*, weekly bulletin of the Church of Christ, Granbury, Texas, of which I was editor.]

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