

- *A Church at the Coalface is one where.... we insist on the foolishness of the Cross*
– (based on sermon from the "Coalface" series, adapted for June 2013)

Chat with the Children

- My weakest is stronger than your strongest...
– pinkie/thumb, height, playing a musical instrument...
- If God could have a daft idea, his daftest idea would be cleverer than my cleverest idea!
– etc
- *Pray, thanking God!*

Made to look a fool?

- Have you ever been written off?
- Made to feel foolish, silly, smally, inconsequential?
– Sidney Michaelson story?
- Have you ever had the **gospel** written off, laughed at, "You don't believe **that**, do you?"
– newspapers/online/press - only **fools** believe in Christian fundamentalism!

What is success?

- Money?
- Intellect?
- Emotional stability?

We preach Christ and him crucified

It is offensive - emotional barriers - Jews (1:22-23)

- Need to admit we are fools! Doesn't appear **strong**

It doesn't make sense - intellectual barriers - Gentiles (1:22-23)

- Need to take step of faith. Does appear **clever**
– (*haven't we left such superstitious nonsense behind?*)

It is God's wisdom! (1:24-25)

- Cf chat with children - pinkie stronger than child's thumb...
- When boys were younger, if Physics came up, even my crudest, simplest explanations of stuff like the Sun and planets was "wiser" than their understanding...
– **God's foolishness is wiser than man's wisdom**

BUT: We rest on the Cross

- If that isn't our heart-beat, we are dead!
- If we do up the halls next door, have a cafe.... and don't have the cross of Christ at the centre, we are fools - not in the world's eyes, but in God's!
- So weakness and fear should be expected! (2:3)
- What is the Cross?
– we are sinners, failures, and our only hope is in Christ on the Cross in our place
– no other hope, no other good, no other wisdom, no other religion...
- Will we **resolve** to know nothing of the faith except **Christ** and **him crucified**?