needed, and much skill: and in those days  
personal danger was besides incurred.”  
It is evident that this is said in no *derogation*  
of Baptism, for he did on occasion  
baptize,—and it would be impossible that  
he should speak lightly of the ordinance  
to which he appeals (Rom. vi. 3) as the   
seal of our union with Christ.

**not in wisdom of speech]** It seems evident from  
this apology, and other hints in the two Epistles, e.g. 2 Cor. x. 10, that the *plainness  
and simplicity of Paul’s speech* had been one  
cause among the Corinthians of alienation  
from him. Perhaps, as hinted above, the  
eloquence of Apollos was extolled to St.  
Paul's disadvantage.

**in** (as the element in which: better than ‘ *with*) **wisdom of speech** (i.e. the speculations of  
philosophy: that these are meant, and not  
mere eloquence or rhetorical form, appears  
by what follows, which treats of the *subject,*  
and not merely of the *manner* of the  
preaching), **lest the Cross of Christ** (the  
great central point of bis preaching; exhibiting  
man’s guilt and God’s love in their  
highest degrees and closest connexion)  
**should be made of none effect**.

This would come to pass rather by *philosophical*  
*speculations* than by *eloquence*.

**18.] For** (explanation of the foregoing clause,—  
and that, assuming the *mutual exclusiveness*  
of the *preaching of the Cross* and  
*wisdom of speech*, and the identity of “*they  
that are perishing*” with the lovers of  
*wisdom of speech*, as if it were said, ‘wisdom of speech would nullify the Cross of  
Christ: for the doctrine of the Cross is to  
the lovers of that wisdom, folly. The  
reasoning is elliptical and involved) **the  
preaching** (literally, **speech** or **doctrine).**  
“There is a word, an eloquence, which is  
most powerful, the eloquence of the Cross:  
referring to the term *wisdom of speech*.”  
Stanley) of the cross is to them that are  
perishing (those who are through unbelief  
on the way to everlasting perdition),  
**foolishness**; **but to us who are being  
saved** (those who are *being saved* are  
*those in the way of salvation*:—who by  
faith have laid hold on Christ, and are by  
Him in the course of *being saved*) **it is the  
power** (see Rom. i. 16, and note: i.e. *the  
perfection* of God’s Power—the Power  
itself, in its noblest manifestation) **of God**.

**19.]** For (continuation of reason  
for not preaching in wisdom of speech :  
because it was prophesied that such wisdom  
should be brought to nought by God) **it is  
written, &c.**

The citation is after the  
Septuagint, with the exception of “*I will  
destroy*,” for “ *I will hide*.” The Hebrew  
is ‘the wisdom of the wise shall perish,  
and the prudence of the prudent shall disappear.’ But as Calvin truly says, “the  
wisdom perishes because the Lord destroys  
it; the prudence disappears because it is  
blotted out and annihilated by God.”

**20.]** The question implies disappearance  
and exclusion.

**the wise,** *generally*: the **scribe**, the Jewish interpreter of the  
law ; the **disputer**, the Greek arguer.

**made foolish]** “Shewn to be foolish in  
comparison with the embracing of the doctrine of the Cross.” Chrysostom.