



1 CORINTHIANS 1:26-31

Followers of Jesus embrace
humility at the cross

God's saving grace does not target impressive and notable people (1:26)

²⁶ *For consider your calling, brothers:*

- “*For*” – *therefore* – connects this passage to verses 18-25
- Paul enlarges the argument of God's ways not being man's ways
- “*calling*” – the divine summons to salvation and to a way of life as followers of Jesus
- Paul asks the people in the Corinthian church to evaluate the types of people experiencing gospel conversion and redirection
- What types of people characterize our church?
- “*brothers*” – Paul does not consider himself elite or exceptional, but a fellow brother in Christ
- Paul was a prominent and zealous defender of Judaism
 - Paul does not evaluate his past as laudable achievements
 - Philippians 3:5–9
 - Paul sees self-righteous zeal as a reason for condemnation, not approval



God's saving grace does not target impressive and notable people (1:26)

not many of you were wise according to worldly standards,

- “*not many*” – does not mean there weren’t any
- There are few among us that are “*wise according to worldly standards*”
 - God is unimpressed with what the world considers knowledgeable and intelligent
 - Clarification: God does not commend ignorance
- *not many were powerful*, - influential and important people in society
- Most of us are “insignificant” rather than “important people”

not many were of noble birth.

- “*of noble birth*” – prominent in society due to pedigree
- Bloodlines were a bigger deal in the Roman Empire than they are today
- Ancestry is still impressive in certain circles, but not with God



Gospel grace promotes humility and dependence (1:27-29)

- God's choice of the nation of Israel recorded in the Old Testament is counterintuitive
 - Deuteronomy 7:6–8

²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise;

- God makes a deliberate sovereign choice of the people that worldly wisdom considers foolish
- God puts to eternal shame those in the world who think they are wise

God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;

- God makes a sovereign choice of people worldly wisdom considers weak
- God puts to eternal shame those in the world who think they are strong and powerful



Gospel grace promotes humility and dependence (1:27-29)

²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are,

- God makes a sovereign choice of people worldly wisdom considers insignificant and irrelevant
- God puts to eternal shame those who think they are superior
 - John 1:12–13
- The fact that a church exists and is fruitful in ministry is only the result of God's power
- No family leader or church leader can take credit for the existence of believers who comprise the church in Corinth or in Nor'wood
 - Matthew 16:16–18
 - 1 Corinthians 3:5–6



Gospel grace promotes humility and dependence (1:27-29)

²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

- There is no ground for boasting in Christ
- You cannot save yourself and you cannot save others
- God's choice of His people in Christ is not due to performance, but the purpose of His glory
 - 1 Corinthians 4:6



Salvation is a gift of God not an achievement of man (1:30)

³⁰ *And because of him you are in Christ Jesus,*

- “*because of him*” – the decision and the glory belong to God
 - Ephesians 2:8–10
 - Romans 11:33–36

who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

- Wisdom given to us by God’s grace reveals Jesus is our righteousness, sanctification and redemption
 - “*righteousness*” – Jesus is the means of our justification
 - 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - “*sanctification*” – Jesus sets His followers apart from sin and selfishness to serve the one true God
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24
 - “*redemption*” – a slave being purchased and freed from his or her bondage
 - Jesus came to set the captives free
 - Romans 6:6–7
 - Jesus alone secures this freedom for those who trust in Him



All the glory for our salvation belongs to God (1:31)

³¹ *so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”*

- Believers need to focus on Jesus and the gospel of the cross
 - The foolish make much of themselves
 - The spiritually wise make much of their God
 - Jeremiah 9:23–24
- There is no place for self-glory; all the glory is the Lord’s



Questions to Consider

- In what ways do you need to see God increase your compassion for lost people?
- How do you need God to increase your confidence in His power to call and transform people?
- How does God's choice of you create worshipful humility and dependence?
- What does your heart say to the truth that it is because of God alone that you are in Christ?
- In what ways can you do better at boasting in the Lord?





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