

*“But God Chose . . .
so that no Human Being Might Boast in [His] Presence”*

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“But God chose . . . so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.” (1 Cor 1:28, 29)

Read 1 Cor. 1:26-31

The wisdom of God from verses 17-25 is clearly seen in whom He chooses. The contrast could not be more startling: the wise, the powerful, and those of noble birth (v. 26) versus what are foolish, weak, and low, despised, and even things that are not (vv. 27, 28). And why did God do such a thing? “In order that no human being might boast in the presence of God (v.29).”

It would appear to be pretty simple. God calls or chooses, and we respond. Our passage tells us what we do not wish to hear. In a culture that idolizes the individual and speaks of self-esteem and self-worth, the Bible targets those who are foolish, weak, low, despised, and even things that are not *in the world*. By doing what He did in the choosing of the outcast, He shamed the wise, the strong, “in order to bring to nothing things that are (v. 28).”

Our greatest asset as a people is the acknowledgment of our own fallen nature. It is when we find ourselves as spiritual beggars, that we find ourselves at the foot of His cross.

What is the outcome of such thinking?

First, we have no grounds for self-exaltation (v. 29). There is nothing within us that moved God to act graciously in our behalf. In fact, if there was it would not have been gracious. He called us and He chose us.

Second, He is the source of our life (v. 30). This thought, though difficult to wrap ourselves around, is the essence of the Christian life. Jesus Christ is our life (Col. 3:3, 4). Without Him there is no Christian life (John 15:5). Our identity is swallowed up in His (1 John 4:17). And He is working in us and through us that which is pleasing to Him (Phil. 2:13). Without this truth, all would be lost.

God made Jesus Christ to be for us: wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

- Wisdom is the integration of one’s position with one’s performance.
- Righteousness is being blameless before God.
- Sanctification is being set apart from sin and for God.
- Redemption is no longer having any sin debt before God.

Each of these words has more than this, but none have less than this. We have no wisdom apart from His wisdom. We have no righteousness apart from His righteousness. All of our righteousness is as filthy rags (Is 64:6). We have no sanctification apart from His sanctification. And we have no redemption apart from His redemption. I am never quite

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sure why we would want it any other way, except that this leaves us completely dependent on Him for all that we have or ever hope to possess.

It is because of this that we come to verse 31, "So that, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD." Our only boast is "In the LORD." Think about the larger context of the chapter. Divisions and quarrellings were beginning to mark the Corinthian church. It was becoming fractured by personalities and "spiritual groupies." What Paul does here is show the "bottom line." All that we are and ever hope to possess is because of the cross work of Jesus Christ. It is because the Father sent His Son to be the Savior of the world (1 John 4:14), that we have wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. We have nothing to boast of in all these gracious actions, thus to follow a man or to splinter a fellowship because of men is completely contrary to the work of our Lord.

As we think on these things, may we rejoice knowing He is enough in this life and in the life to come.