

## Why the World Mocks Christians, Part 5 - 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 – March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014

- Today's teaching will be part five of a series I've titled, "Why the World Mocks Christians."
- I've been looking forward to the end of this chapter for a number of reasons chief of which is it explains why God calls people like you and I.
- By that I mean, verses twenty-six through thirty-one speak to how it is that God does not call the qualified, rather, He qualifies the called.

- As such, we have yet another reason to add to our list as to why it is the world hates us so, as believers in, and followers of Jesus Christ.
- The common denominator with all the reasons on our list is that the world's mocking of us says more about them than it does about us.
- If the truth be known, this serves as a litmus test of sorts in the sense that it's when the world loves us, that we should really be concerned.

### 1. They are perishing (Verse 18)

### 2. Their human wisdom is brought to naught (Verse 19)

### 3. They are blinded by their own pride (Verses 20-21)

### 4. They have rejected a crucified Christ (Verses 22-25)

### 5. They fancy themselves as being superior (Verses 26-31)

- v26 Paul says think of what you were when you were called, not many were wise by human standards, or influential, or were of noble birth.
- v27 He says God chose the foolish things of this world to shame the wise, and He chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.
- v28 Paul then says God also chose the lowly and despised things of this world and the things that are not so as to nullify the things that are.
- v29-30 He says no one may boast as we're in Christ Who became for us wisdom from God as our righteousness, holiness, and redemption.

Then, in verse 31, Paul quotes [Jeremiah 9:23-24](#), which says, "This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, (24) but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD.

- Right out of the shoot here, we have a problem, first for the world, and second for those God calls, and this, for two very different reasons.
- It's an insulting slap in the face to those considered wise by human standards such that they were venerated for their oratory superiority.
- Conversely, it's a condescending slap in the face to those whom God has called such that they were denigrated for their oratory inferiority.

- Consequently, the Corinthian's had abandoned those whom God called, instead opting for the oratory wisdom of men with more influence.
- It would be akin to how in our day we are prone to think that someone who is famous, and wealthy would have more influence on the lost.
- The fact of the matter is it's not the talent of man that brings someone to Christ; it's the Grace of God, vis-à-vis the Holy Spirit that does it.

Charles Spurgeon - "Paul loved the church in Corinth, but it caused him much pain and trouble through the evils which grew up in it, principally through the erroneous doctrines of Judaizing teachers, the fact that the church had more talent than grace, and that no pastor was raised up to conduct its affairs."

- I've heard it said that if you can intellectually and eloquently talk someone into the kingdom, then they could be talked out of the kingdom.
- This is why God doesn't choose the skilled orator; rather He chooses that which is deemed foolish by the world, so as to shame the wise.
- Paul saying God chooses the lowly and despised things carries with it the idea of those whom the world sees as the worthless nobody's.

- In other words it's the least the last the weakest and the meekest that God will choose to use instead of those who are famous somebody's.
- This is why the world is so mystified and baffled, or shamed, if you prefer, thus, because they don't know what to make of it, they dismiss it.
- If God used the influential wisdom of man, then it would no longer be about the message, rather, it would be about the messenger instead.

- Moreover, if it were about the messenger and not the message, then so too would the messenger boast in the glory as the star of the show.
- I suppose you could say God is protecting the Gospel from being hijacked in that an eloquent orator in the spotlight tries to steal the show.
- The reason God will choose to use those whom the world sees as the worthless nobody's is because only the Lord can take the credit.

- It's evidenced by what Paul writes in verse twenty-six where he says, "not many of you were influential, and not many were of noble birth.
- Notice how Paul says not "many" of you were wise by human standards instead of saying not "any" of you were wise by human standards.
- The reason I point this out is because there are some people who would be considered wise by human standards that do come to Christ.

One commentator writes of a story that's told of one noble Lady Huntington, the rich and influential friend of Whitfield and Wesley, who said she was going to heaven by an "m": it isn't any noble; instead it is not many noble.

Henry Morris - "Paul does not say, 'not any,' but, 'not many.' There have always been a few brilliant or powerful or aristocratic men who have devoted their gifts to the Lord and His Word, but they have always been the exceptions. This passage, in fact, is a remarkably fulfilled prophecy, having remained incisively true for almost 2,000 years. Their very dominance in the world should be regarded as merely another proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures rather than being discouraged by the intellectual snobbery of educated unbelievers."

- It's for this reason that the pages of Holy Writ are replete with God calling the outcasts, and the down casts, like Moses and Gideon, et al.
- We do err greatly when we mistakenly assume that God called the likes of a Moses or Gideon because they were the best man for the job.
- Nothing could be further from the truth, this because, even if they wanted to, these men and women could never get away with boasting.

- In closing, I'd like to pose a couple of questions for all of us to ponder and in so doing, allow the Holy Spirit to search our hearts concerning.
- First, have I been dismissive of the calling God has placed on my life under the banner of thinking that I'm the least qualified to be doing it?
- Second, have I been a hindrance to the calling God has placed on my life under the banner of thinking that I'm should take the credit for it?