

In Your Weakness Part 2

1 Corinthians 1

26 Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.

27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him. 30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. 31 Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”

Vs. 26a

Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called.

The Apostle Paul says to the Corinthian believers; remember back to your beginning. Remember what state you were in. Think of what you were.

The same is true for you and I. The before the Grace of God went to work on us.

Remember what you were doing and remember who you were when you were called.

Perhaps there was some foolish things we did.

Some things we would rather forget.

There are some wow testimonies in this room.

There were some shocked people when they found out we were serving God.

Vs. 26b

Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.

The word here is **many**:

not **many** of you were wise... influential.. or of noble birth.

It doesn't say not **any**... just not many.

Lady Huntington, a rich and influential friend of Whitfield and Wesley, said she was going to heaven by an "m": it doesn't say, not any of you; instead it says not many noble.

I'm sure there were in the Corinthian Church and in other churches some who were wise by human standards and perhaps influential or even of noble birth. But the truth is not many of them were.

Vs. 27 & 28

27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him.

Vs. 27

But God chose

It was of his own will.

It was his preference to pick the way he does.

The many he chose had the odds stacked against them.

The many he chooses probably never voted most likely to succeed.

They may have never been valedictorians or voted most popular.

Yet he chooses people like that.

People no one ever expected he would choose.

Vs. 27,28

But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame (confound) the wise;

God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are,

Confound: to cause surprise or confusion, especially by acting against their expectation.

Story: Friend Warren Phipps. He is a friend of mine that I met when we first moved to Pagosa Springs. He was our Children's Pastor but he was also one of the top advanced ski instructors at Wolf Creek. He taught me how to ski.

- Warren was not only a little better than me, He was way better than me.
- God is not only a little better than the best that man can do, He is way better...

MSG

"Isn't it obvious that God deliberately chose men and women that the culture overlooks and exploits and abuses, (he) chose these "nobodies" to expose the hollow pretensions of the "somebodies"? That makes it quite clear that none of you can get by with blowing your own horn before God. Everything that we have—right thinking and right living, a clean slate and a fresh start—comes from God by way of Jesus Christ."

- God has called the weak and ignorant *first*, but not exclusively; shepherds first, then wise men; fishermen first, then the educated (like Paul, who was himself an educated man).

"The ancient Christians were for the most part slaves and men of low station; the whole history of the expansion of the church is in reality a progressive victory of the ignorant over the learned, the lowly over the lofty, until the emperor himself laid down his crown before the cross of Christ." (Alford, quoting Olshausen)

- This is consistent through out scripture...

Story of Gideon

Judges 6:12

The Angels greeting to Gideon was: "The Lord *is* with you, you mighty man of valor!"

Judges 6:15

Gideon said, "Pardon me, my lord, but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family."

Weakness: In want of strength

- of the body
 - its native weakness and frailty
 - feebleness of health or sickness
- of the soul
 - in want of strength and capacity necessary
 - to understand a thing
 - to do things great and glorious
 - to restrain corrupt desires
 - to bear trials and troubles

So what Gideon said was, "My clan is (in the greatest want of strength) in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family."

- Gideon's weakness wasn't that he couldn't see the need...
- It wasn't that he wasn't humble, caring, knowledgeable or teachable
- His weakness wasn't that he lacked faith in God

Judges 6:15

13 "Pardon me, my lord," Gideon replied, "but if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our ancestors told us about when they said, 'Did not the Lord bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."

- His weakness was that he couldn't see God using Him to meet the need...

Judges 6:16

The Lord answered, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive."

1 Corinthians 1

Vs. 29

“so that no one may boast before him”

This is the end result. No one will stand before God and declare, “I figured You out” or “You did it just like I thought You should.” God’s ways are greater and higher, and nothing of the flesh will glory in His presence.

Vs. 31

Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”

Here Paul uses reference to

Jeremiah 9:23-24

23 Thus says the Lord:

“Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom,
Let not the mighty *man* glory in his might,
Nor let the rich *man* glory in his riches;

24

But let him who glories glory in this,
That he understands and knows Me,
That I *am* the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness
in the earth.

For in these I delight,” says the Lord.

In this way God gets the Glory.

No man can say God you owe me because it is God who enables man in his weakness to do far more than he would have ever been able if it had not been for His Grace.

God does it this way so that He gets the glory. The *path* for God’s glory is Christ crucified; the *evidence* of God’s glory is His choice of the lowly.