

Glory In The Lord – 1Corinthians 1:26-31

Bible Study ~ 12/21/16

Grace Church of Lockeford

Paul has just argued in vv. 18-25 that the message of the Cross, the preaching of the gospel, and the crucified Christ, are foolishness to those who do not believe. Here Paul is saying that not only is the message we preach foolish, the instruments that preach it are as well. Because of the nature of the messengers, God receives greater glory. **These verses give us three reasons to glory in the Lord. First we consider the need to...**

1. Glory Because Of Who Has Been Called v. 26

“See” is the idea of consider, this connects the passage. Because God has chosen the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe, because the Cross of Christ is the power of God; consider your calling. Calling – κλη̃σις klē̃sis *an authoritative summons to participate or take part in something; especially a summons to the hope of salvation in Jesus.* Paul wants the body of Christ in Corinth to stop and consider the authoritative summons to salvation and the ministry that results from that call. He wants them to think about who has been called. So, who has been called? Not many wise, mighty, and noble. The majority of those who come to Christ are not wise, mighty, or noble. They are the ordinary people. There are some who are called having great physical gifts or worldly endowments, but they are the exception, not the rule.

Wise – σοφός Sophos *having accumulated knowledge or discernment.* This is qualified by the phrase. “According to the flesh” – σάρξ sarx *humanity especially understood according to their physical nature (which is often understood as the seat of sin and rebellion to God).* Those the world would view as wise are not chosen. Wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord. Until we come to Christ, we cannot be wise. Those who are considered wise by the world often face many obstacles to belief. Mighty – δυνατός dynatos *strong; powerful. A person characterized by having some degree of authority or influence.* This is not talking about physical power so much as authority or influence. Noble – εὐγενής eugenēs *noble; well born. Noble (class) – of or belonging to or constituting the hereditary or social aristocracy.*

Those God calls into salvation and equips to be preachers of the gospel are not often those others listen to because of reputation, position, or birth. Paul is saying that while God does occasionally work that way, the normal way God has chosen to spread the message of the gospel is through ordinary people like you and me. And we glory in that! What an incredible blessing that an all-powerful God would chose to work through ordinary people! This means that He not only can use you and me, He wants to use us! His ways truly are past finding out! **We glorify God in who He has called. We also...**

2. Glory Because Of Who God Has Chosen vv. 27-29

“But God” like in every other instance these two words appear, they introduce a huge blessing! God could have called those who were wise, mighty, and noble, but instead He chose us! This is a really cool word. The idea is that we have been handpicked for a specific purpose. Why are we chosen? Is it because we are awesome or super-spiritual? No. God chose “Foolish things” – μωρός mōros *stupid. Devoid of wisdom, good sense, or sound judgment.* Just as the gospel message is viewed as stupid by the world, so are those who preach it. Evangelical, Bible-believing, Christians do not have the reputation of being scholarly and smart. Not that some aren’t, but that the world sees us as foolish. And these foolish instruments of God put the wise to shame. “Put to shame” is the ide of *humiliate*. Wise here is the same as above but in this context it is wise according to the world. When God uses the foolish to preach the gospel it humiliates those who are wise in the world. We are again reminded that God has chosen us! We are not gospel message bearers by accident! We have been selected by God for His glory and purpose! This is despite the fact that we are weak. Again the qualification is “of the world” those whom the world perceives as weak. How many times have we heard that Jesus, or God, or the Church is a crutch? It is for weak people? That is how the we are viewed by the world! But then God uses us! We are foolish and weak, yet God uses us to shame the wise and mighty.

Paul continues in *verse 28*. “Base” is the opposite of noble – ἀγενής *agenēs insignificant; lowborn*. Rather than calling the noble; the Lord calls the lowborn and uses them to bring the noble to nothing. Again the qualification is “of the world”. Paul wants us to understand that this is not the way God views us but the way the world system that is in rebellion to God views us. To them we are “Despised” – ἐξουθενέω *exoutheneō To be utterly disdained – to be or become treated contemptuously as if completely worthless or despicable*. This is often the world’s view of Christ followers. We are worthless and despicable to them. You can see the beginnings of this shift in our world today. Christians are viewed as the problem. For the third time we are again reminded of God’s choosing. Paul wants us to understand that even though we are viewed negatively by the world, we are the chosen of God. We are His special, called out instruments to spread the good news of Christ! “The things that are not” is a way of saying the things that are so disdained it’s like they don’t exist. In Paul’s day Christians were considered non-persons! They were something disdained. God chooses those viewed as worthless to bring to nothing those who view themselves as important. Bring to nothing – καταργέω *katargeō wipe out; set aside; abolish. To inactivate – to cause something to become idle, inactive, inoperative, or useless*. God uses us to set aside or abolish those who think they are something. This is the power of the gospel! Why would God do this? *Verse 29*.

The Greek word “pas” in in this verse but not translated because it is somewhat redundant and it makes it difficult to read, but it is still important. Literally it would read “that no all flesh should glory in his presence.” Paul’s desire is to communicate that when God works through the foolish, weak, base, despised, and not, there is no one in all of flesh who can glory because it is all of God! We cannot boast. There is nothing in and of ourselves in which to glory. So we glory in the Lord. Glory – καυχάομαι *kauchaomai To boast (exult) – to display or proclaim publicly (and ostentatiously) a satisfied contentment with one’s own or another’s achievements*. We are unable to glory in our flesh. There is nothing to boast about! God has accomplished it all! What blessings we have in Christ! Though we are considered foolish, weak, base, despised, and non-existent, God has chosen us to bear the message of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ! And because of His grace at work in us we give Him all the glory! **We glory because of who God has called, we glory in who He has chosen and we...**

3. Glory Because Of What Christ Became vv. 30-31

“But” here is in contrast to glorying in His presence. God has chosen these weak and foolish things so that no one can glory. These two verses seem to present additional reasons why we cannot glory. We cannot glory in ourselves because we are in Christ Jesus. Are – ἐστέ *este be. To be (quality) – to have the quality of being*. Because of God and His choosing, we have our being in Christ! And Christ is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. This is fascinating because it is something that Christ became. Before His death on the Cross for sin He was not these things for us! While it was true that these things were planned before the foundation of the world and that in the divine mind of God He was slain from the foundation of the world, it is also true that the crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ took place at a moment in time. And at that moment, Christ became these things for us. First He became wisdom. Again we note that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Christ became wisdom for us and this comes from God. This contrasts with the wise of this world. He also became Righteousness – δικαιοσύνη *dikaioynē righteousness. Righteousness (state) – a status of legal rectitude that satisfies the moral requirements of God’s character. On our own it is impossible for us to satisfy the moral requirements of God’s character! This is only found in Christ! He is our righteousness! He is also our Sanctification – ἁγιασμός *hagiasmos holiness; sanctification. Sanctification – the act of becoming more personally dedicated to God; especially by becoming more distinct, devoted, or morally pure*. There is no sanctification apart from Christ! We can try to be holy, try to be devoted to Him, but unless He is in us, we have no hope of holiness. Christ is our holiness! Lastly, He is our redemption. Christ is our ransom. He has purchased us and liberated us from sin. There is no freedom apart from Christ!*

Paul writes in *verse 31* of the reason all this was done. That or so that. Christ did all this that we might glory in Him alone. We glory in the Lord because all the things that we lack are found in Him! Because these things are true we cannot glory in ourselves. As Paul says in *Colossians 2:10*, we are complete in Christ! Paul quotes *Jeremiah 9:24* to exhort us to glory in the Lord. Because Christ is all in all, we cannot boast or exult. We glory in the Lord! If we are going to boast, it is going to be in Christ! We boast in Who He is and what He has done for us! We boast that He is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption! We boast that apart from Him we have nothing! We boast in Christ that He might be glorified in us! What a blessed position is ours! We have the privilege of being chosen and used by God though we are nothing. Though we are weak, foolish, and undeserving; we are vessels of His glory. There is no greater blessing than to be used by God to spread the good news of Christ.

CHALLENGE: Boast in the power of God that uses us flawed vessels to bring Christ glory!

V. 26

See – βλέπω *blepō see. To consider (look at) – to take into consideration as an example; conceived of as directing one's gaze towards something.*

Brethren – ἀδελφός *adelphos brother. Sibling believers – believers understood as one's own siblings in God's family.*

Many – πολὺς *polys great; many; much. Multitude (gathering) – a multitude (throng) or a large gathering of people.*

V. 27

Has chosen – ἐκλέγομαι *eklegomai choose; select. To choose – to select for one's own reasons or purposes from a number of alternatives.*

World – κόσμος *kosmos world. World system – the people constituting the world whose values, beliefs, and morals are in distinction and rebellion to God's.*

Put to shame – καταισχύνω *kataischynō put to shame; humiliate. To dishonor – to bring shame or dishonor upon or fail to respect.*

Weak – ἀσθενής *asthenēs weak; sick. Weak (morally) – wanting in moral strength, courage, or will.*

Mighty – ἰσχυρός *ischyros mighty; strong; powerful. Strong – having strength or power greater than average or expected.*

This is a different word than in v. 26.

V. 28

Not – μὴ *mē not. Utterly disdained things (non-existing things) – anything treated contemptuously as if completely worthless or despicable; understood as not having an existence at all. This is a different word than Paul uses in v. 26 when he says “not many wise” etc. Here it is a description.*

Are – ὄντα *ōnta be. To exist – to have an existence, be extant.*

V. 29

All – πᾶς *pas every; all. Entire – constituting the full quantity or extent; complete.*

V. 30

Became – γίνομαι *ginomai be; become; take place. To become (condition) – to enter or assume a certain state or condition.*

Wisdom – σοφία *Sophia wisdom. Wisdom – the capacity for rational thought, inference or discrimination (and the application of it). Same root word as in v. 26 but slightly different here.*

Redemption – ἀπολύτρωσις *apolytrōsis redemption. Full Redemption – a redemption most likely to greater extent or degree.*

V. 31

Written – γράφω *graphō write. To be written (state) – to be or become set down in writing.*

Glories – same as in v. 29. Boast or exult.