



## ***The First Epistle to the Corinthians***

### ***I Corinth 1:26-31 Consider Your Calling***

- ***I Corinth 1:26 – “For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.”***
  - *Ye see* – do they see or are they being challenged to see?
  - What does it mean to be *called*?
    - Everywhere in the NT *calling* or *called* is used as an invitation to embrace salvation on God’s terms.
      - *Rom 11:29; 1 Cor 7:20; Eph 1:18, 4:1, 4:4; Phil 3:14; 1 Thess 1:11; 1 Tim 1:9; Heb 3:1; 2 Peter 1:10.*
    - This is addressed to the *brethren* – already called and saved.
  - Notice those who are less likely to be called
    - *wise according to the flesh, the mighty, the noble*
    - Why, is God’s calling not there for all?
      - *1 Tim 2:3,4 - For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*
      - Let’s look again at *1 Cor 1:21*



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- But there were some exceptions noted in scripture:
  - Joseph of Arimathea a rich counsellor (*Mark 15:43*); Sergius Paulus a Roman deputy (*Acts 13:7*); Dionysius the Areopagite (*Acts 17:34*); and some in Caesar’s palace (*Phil 4:22*).
- However, *“The whole history of the expansion of the Church is 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”* – Olshausen
  - *James 2:5 - Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?*
- ***I Corinth 1:27 – “But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;”***
  - Notice God has chosen *to shame*, used twice here.



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- And in *verses 28 and 31*, the same Greek work *hina*, that introduces purpose clauses, is used but here is translated as *that* not *to*.
- God meant His business here, i.e. that He has used *the foolish and weak things of the world to shame the wise and mighty*.
  - Let's define *the foolish and weak things of the world*.
    - *foolish* – imprudent, without wisdom, destitute of learning, rank, wealth, and power
    - *weak* - infirm, feeble, without strength or might
  - How did *the foolish and weak things of the world* shame or confound the wise and mighty?
    - What about today, is this still valid?
- ***I Corinth 1:28 – “and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,”***
  - And He has also *chosen base things of the world, things*



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*despised and the things which are not.*

- *things which are not* - “*That which is nothing; which is worthless; which has no existence; those things which were below contempt itself; and which, in the estimation of the world, were passed by as having no existence-as not having sufficient importance to be esteemed worthy even of the slight notice which is implied in contempt.*” – Barnes
  - *Rom 4:17* - (as it is written, “*I have made you a father of many nations*”) in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls ***those things which do not exist as though they did***;
  - At the time of this epistle, some interpret *things which are not* as the Gentiles?
- And for what purpose?
  - *to bring to nothing the things that are*,
  - What's this all about anyway?
    - This world system and all its strength, might and pride has no eternal value.
    - This is a declaration of our adoption and citizenship, and this position is not of the *wise* and *mighty* world in which we dwell – only our business address!
    - Let's also turn to verse 29!



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- ***I Corinth 1:29 – “that no flesh should glory in His presence.”***
  - In the Greek, ‘no’ is followed by *pas* which is not translated into English – means each and every; and *pas* in context provides even more emphasis to ‘no’.
  - *flesh (whole man) should glory in His presence*
    - *to glory – kauchaomai*, to one’s advantage or to the praise of one
    - The vanity of this world that’s manifested by/in the *flesh* has no merit in heavenly places.
      - *1 Pet 1:24 – because “All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away,*
      - *Rom 3:27 - Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.*
    - The alternative
      - *2 Cor 4:2 - But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.*



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- ***I Corinth 1:30 – “But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—”***
  - *But of Him* – out of as a source (*ek*), and in contrast to the flesh.
  - And *you* is an emphatic personal pronoun and Paul stresses that *you* as believers are different from all others.
  - Notice the tense of the 2 verbs, *are* and *became* or *made unto us*, are in the present indicative and aorist passive indicative tenses.
    - We are in Christ Jesus – fact and now
    - And *Christ Jesus has become for us the wisdom of God* – done once, we were the recipients and it’s a fact!
  - Moreover, in addition to being made wise (not of this world, *Col 2:3*) we are *made righteous* (none of ourselves, *2 Cor 5:21*), are *sanctified* (set apart, *John 17:19*) and *redeemed* (by His precious blood, *Eph 1:7*)!



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- *1 Cor 15:10 - But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*
- ***I Corinth 1:31 - that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.”***
  - Let’s look at *Jer 9:23,24*.
  - The verbs here are present, middle deponent participles (mostly implies active voice) and imperative.
    - We need to *glory in the Lord* and do it now!
    - *Gal 6:14 - But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*
    - This is entirely our purposeful walk down here – to bring glory to the Lord!!!