

## 1 Corinthians Series #5

### "Glory In The Lord" - 1 Cor. 1:26-31

#### I. INTRODUCTION

##### A. Brain Washed

1. Today's study is part and parcel of what we looked at last week.
2. Section begins at v. 18 (Read it)
3. Reminds me of a story I once heard . . .
  - a. a man overheard a Christian co-worker speaking to another co-worker about Jesus
  - b. he interrupted and said, "All you Christians are brainwashed."
  - c. the believer replied, "I'd say that everyone is brainwashed to some degree. But the Christian gets to chose what he wants to wash his brain with."
4. Paul contrasts the wisdom of man and the wisdom of God
  - a. the Corinthians, while genuine believers, were trusting in the wisdom of the world more than the wisdom of God when it came to growing in faith
  - b. because there are so many differences of opinion among people about what is wise, the church was divided into warring camps
  - c. Paul calls them to a unity based solely on the wisdom of God.

##### B. No Compliment!

1. In the verse before us today, Paul pays them no compliment
2. In fact, it appears to be a colossal put down.

#### II. TEXT

##### A. V. 26

**26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*:**

1. Paul says, "Look around the church there in Corinth. According to the world's standards, there are not many great people among you. Rather, you're a bunch of social rejects."
2. " You see your calling . . . "
  - a. there are not many who are wise as the world would define wisdom
  - b. not many powerful
  - c. not many who are noble, meaning of high birth, such as princes or magistrates

3. Notice Paul did not say "any;" he said "many."
  - a. the NT tells us about a few people of note
  - b. but the vast majority were common people and from the lower classes
  - c. actually, it was not at all fashionable to be a Christian
  - d. a critic of Christianity named Celsus wrote this in 178 AD, 'Let no cultured person draw near to Christianity, none wise, none sensible; for all that kind of thing we count evil; but if any man is ignorant, if any is wanting in sense and culture, if any man is a fool let him come boldly.'
  - e. of Christians he wrote, "We see them in their houses, wool dressers, cobblers and fullers, the most uneducated and vulgar persons. They are like a swarm of bats, or ants creeping out of their nests, or frogs holding a symposium round a swamp, or worms in a corner of mud."
4. History tells us that there were many slaves who comprised the early church
  - a. they were welcomed with open arms
  - b. that was surprising because the rest of society treated them with contempt.
  - c. slaves weren't people
  - d. they were considered as *living tools*
  - e. they had no hope
    - 1) they could be bought and sold at a whim
    - 2) owners regularly beat them, often killing them
    - 3) their children were not their own
  - f. but the gospel of Christ offered them hope
  - g. William Barclay, "Christianity made people who were mere things into real men and women - more into sons and daughters of God; it gave those who had no respect their self-respect; it gave those who had no life, life eternal; it told men that, even if they did not matter to other men, they still mattered intensely to God. It told men who, in the eyes of the world were worthless, that, in the eyes of God they were worth the death of His only Son. Christianity was, and still is, the most uplifting thing in the whole universe."

B. Vs. 27-29

**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;**  
**28 and base things of the world and things which are despised God has**

**chosen, and things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,  
29 that no flesh should glory in His presence.**

1. If we were put in charge of the plan of God, we would come up with a completely different way to spread the gospel and grow the church
2. We would strategize and organize and then set forth to make the Gospel appealing to the world
3. We'd try to get endorsements from the famous and popular
4. We'd try to convert the noteworthy so that their influence and reputation would be added to the cause of Christ
  - a. we'd try to win the wise, the learned of the age - so we'd go after . . .
    - 1) professors
    - 2) philosophers
    - 3) scientists
    - 4) great thinkers
  - b. we'd try to win the mighty, the powerful - so we'd go after . . .
    - 1) professional athletes
    - 2) the rich and famous
  - c. we'd try to win the noble, that is the movers and shakers of our time, the cultural elite - so we'd go after . . .
    - 1) media moguls
    - 2) celebrities
5. And having secured their help, the rest of the world would flock to our banner - oops, I mean, the banner of Christ
6. But who would get the glory? = The wise, mighty, and noble!
7. Thank God, He hasn't put us in charge!
8. He hasn't chosen many wise, mighty, and noble
9. He has chosen the foolish, weak, and despised
10. And in that choosing, He has made them truly wise, truly strong, and truly noble.
  - a. who is wiser - Carl Sagan or the humble secretary who daily walks with God, experiencing the riches of His grace, love, and righteousness, and has an eternal promise of everlasting life?
  - b. who is stronger - Arnold Schwarzenegger or the Christian computer programmer who three times a week meets with his brothers to engage in spiritual warfare by tearing down spiritual strongholds and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God?
  - c. who is nobler - Arsenio Hall or YOU who are called a son or daughter of the King of the Universe?

11. God looks at all the greatness of man, all that he considers wise, mighty, and hip and declares, "Overturn! Overturn! Overturn!"
  12. All so that He might get the glory!
- 

13. Who gets the glory for your salvation?
  - a. none but God!
  - b. because your salvation is by His grace alone
  - c. if you are truly saved, then you weren't the product of man's wisdom, might, or nobility
  - d. you are the product of God's grace
  - e. to Him be the glory!
  - f. **Ephesians 2:8-9 "By grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."**

C. Vs. 30-31

**30 But of Him are you in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God - and righteousness and sanctification and redemption - 31 that, as it is written, "He that glories, let him glory in the Lord."**

1. As it was for the Corinthians, so it is for us
  - a. look around - go on, look!
  - b. not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble; according to the world's estimation of these things
2. But what the world could not do in all its wisdom and strength, God has done in His wisdom and might
  - a. He has healed broken lives
  - b. He has healed broken marriages
  - c. He has given hope to the hopeless
  - d. He has given worth to the worthless
  - e. He has filled the empty
  - f. Given purpose to the lost
3. In Christ we have wisdom
  - a. the scientist can merely tell us the "how" of things
  - b. but the Christian knows "why"
4. In Christ we have righteousness
  - a. the psychologist can merely tell us how to be right with one another
  - b. but the Christian knows how to be right with God
5. In Christ we have sanctification, by which Paul means we grow in grace
  - a. the world merely puts before us empty and vain marks of meaningless success

- b. but the Christian is being conformed into the very image of Jesus Christ, and enjoying the fruit of the HS
- 6. In Christ we have redemption, by which Paul means we have the promise of eternal life
  - a. the world has no hope or promise of life after death
  - b. but the Christian's hope is an anchor of the soul, fastened securely to the throne of our sovereign God.
- 7. Paul quotes the prophet Jeremiah, "**He that glories, let him glory in the Lord.**"
- 8. Christian, heed these words. Plants the seeds of these words deep in your heart and diligently cultivate their growth.
- 9. It is our great privilege to glory, not in the fleeting things of this passing age, but in the eternal wisdom, strength, and nobility of God!

### III. CONCLUSION

#### A. The Pressure

- 1. The pressure to fit in to the world is fierce
- 2. The world has it's own wisdom and ways
  - a. fashion
  - b. what's hip, hot, new, fun, exciting.
  - c. what NOT!
- 3. The appeal is so great, it's easy for us to define our lives by what's acceptable by the world
- 4. Some years ago, we visited old friends
  - a. all believers
  - b. but totally wrapped up in the world
  - c. cars, condos, plants, pets, furniture, sports, clothes, hair, vacations, jobs
  - d. never talked about the Lord

#### B. What Defines Our Lives?

- 1. Where we live -o - That we have eternal life?
- 2. What we wear -or- That we are clothed in royal robes of the righteousness of Christ?
- 3. What we drive -or- That we have a place to go?
- 4. Where we work -or- That Christ works in us?
- 5. Who our friends are -or- That Jesus is our Friend?
- 6. "**He who glories, let him glory in the Lord!**"