

Glory to God. A careful study of Romans 6 to 8 reveals how God accounts the fact of identification with Christ a necessity for this doctrine of sanctification.

- c. Redemption. One would have considered this to be first in order, but is mentioned last to give it emphasis. The previous two are founded on this one. Because God set us free by purchase, righteousness and sanctification are the issue.

4. The EXALTATION of God. vv. 29-31.

The ultimate goal of all creation is the glory of God (Rev. 4:11). So in His final comment on "wisdom," Paul shows that God is exalted. How?

- a. By removing human glory. vv. 29, 30.

Paul levels all men in one verse (v. 29) and then shows that even a believer must not boast since has received all in Christ.

- b. By approving of divine glory. v. 31.

The quotation of Jeremiah 9:29 marks the total end of all creation -- the glory of God alone.

Conclusion: What does all this mean to us today? Simply this: God's ways are not ours. However, He gives everything to the one who humbles himself and accepts all in Christ Jesus our Lord! Amen.

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

"The Call of the Cross"

I Cor. 1:26-31

Introduction

1. Theory is one matter; practice is another. So it is with principle and application. Paul has argued for the primacy of the wisdom of God which is the foolishness of men. Now he applies the same to the case of the Corinthians.

2. The proclamation of the Cross of Christ has a drawing power. It is true the Father draws men and women unto Himself (John 6:44), but when Christ is lifted up, men are drawn to the Cross (John 12:32). Some come in judgment; others unto slavation. It is the responsibility of God's people to preach and commit the results of that preaching unto the Lord (Rev. 22:17).

3. What happened when the Gospel was preached at Corinth? Results were realized! The elements of this matter are clearly seen in this section. They all substantiate the fact that God recruits in ways which are unique and in agreement with His own infinite wisdom!

1. The ELECTION of God. vv. 26-28

Three times over the apostle employs a Greek verb which indicates the infinite choice of Almighty God. It is aorist middle suggesting a once-for-all choice wherein He had personal interest. Each time the verb is employed, the purpose involved is made known. What does God choose? Note the text:

- a. Foolish things. v. 27 This is neuter and plural. Thus there are many cases and the quality of those whom God has chosen is emphasized rather than the fact that they are human beings.
- b. Weak things. v. 27. Again the neuter and plural suggesting the same as above.
- c. Base things. v. 28. Again the neuter and plural as above. The thought is base-born things, things absolutely made of nothing, things non-existent! The perfect passive participles here note that this is the way things are set down! It is a

studied piece of rhetoric indeed and is very powerfully put down!

NOTE: God's call is to non-entities as far as the world is concerned. For philosophers and statesmen, these are but cyphers in their reckoning. Remember, this is the estimate of the world concerning God's astonishing choices! The world laughed then at the beggarly selves of Christians and still does today. It laughed to scorn the beggarly Gospel then and still does today. God deliberately turned down three classes of men in order to make the qualitative choices just listed. Mark them:

- a. Wise men. v. 25. This speaks of mental acumen. It is masculine, so suggests men. Above the force of the neuter is the quality or class rather than humanity as such. This probably also has reference to philosophers. They are contrasted with the "foolish" things above.
- b. Mighty men. v. 25. This is also masculine and refers to the office of men. It speaks of men of dignity and power. These men of rank and political influence were not God's choice.
- c. Noble men. v. 25. Here the masculine noun suggests high birth or high descent. The better classes were not chosen.

NOTE: It is patent that the majority of the early converts to Christianity were either slaves or freedmen. This is confirmed by the names found on the inscriptions of the catacombs. It was the standing reproach of hostile critics--and still is, but the boast of the Apologists then and now! Just remember: it is all the estimation of men and does not represent true value! One soul -- whosever he may be -- is worth a universe to God (Mark 8:36, 37).

2. The INTENTION of God. vv. 27-28.

By virtue of God's choosing, what is His goal? --

- a. To confound the wise. v. 27. The verb here suggests the idea of shame. Hence, God made His infinite choices to shame the wise men of the world! The masculine is used, hence, men are in view. The subjunctive mood points to God's purpose.
- b. To confound the mighty. v. 27. Same verb as above, but the neuter noun is used. Hence the idea is of putting to shame strong things. Whatever the world has going for it is put to shame by God's choice!
- c. To annul the things which are. v. 28. The verb here means to make idle or bring to naught. The neuter noun is used here and with the verb adds the idea of robbing the scornful world of its very power and being! God, therefore, has set the stage to bring the death knell to the world-system!

3. The VISION of God. v. 30.

If only we could grasp the fullness of the phrase "in Christ." That high position is beyond human comprehension. God is not concerned with one's condition in life, but with his calling (v. 26). It is a calling to be "in Christ." He is made (verb means to "become," as in John 1:14) wisdom unto the believer! All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are bound in HIM (Col. 2:3). The next three terms mentioned are exegetical of the noun, "wisdom."

- a. Righteousness. Here is a judicial term marking the final and complete act of the Court of Heaven concerning a child of God. He is now reckoned just! The whole of Romans has this as its key (cf. 1:17).
- b. Sanctification. This is a concomitant of the first item. Being "in Christ" brings a separation unto God which is never equalled.