

1 Corinthians series #5 - More Foolishness

1 Corinthians 1: 26-31

1 Corinthians 1:26-31 ²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ And because of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

INTRODUCTION

God insists on being Himself and doing things His own way. Human beings don't like this very much and by in large think it is foolishness. But man needs to be careful because ‘the foolishness of God is wiser than men.’

This morning let me remind us all that when we are using the word ‘foolishness’ we are NOT saying that God’s plans are foolish, nor are we foolish in believing in what He has said and done – but rather God’s ways and plans APPEAR foolish to the fallen human being’s mind and will – but in reality ‘the foolishness of God is wiser than men.’

This morning I want to make three points from our text.

First we will deal with the plan God chose to adopt. Then we will see the procedures God chose to employ and finally come to the point Paul makes of the people God chose to use. So get out your Bible and come along for the ride as we look to our text in 1 Cor 1: 26-31.

1. THE PLAN GOD CHOSE TO ADOPT:

Well first of all we see His insistence on revealing His glory.

He does this as He reveals His unique character:

Isaiah 43:11 ¹¹ I, I am the LORD, and besides me there is no savior.
Deuteronomy 4:35 ³⁵ To you it was shown, that you might know that the LORD is God; there is no other besides Him.

But He also reveals His glory in His unique creation: Genesis 1:26 ²⁶
Then God said, “Let Us make man in our image, after Our likeness. And

let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

Secondly, God has **RESISTANCE** to **sharing His glory**.

We see that He would not share it with angels: Isaiah 14:12-17 ¹²“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! ¹³You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; ¹⁴I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ ¹⁵But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit. ¹⁶Those who see you will stare at you and ponder over you: ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, ¹⁷who made the world like a desert and overthrew its cities, who did not let his prisoners go home?’

And He deals with human attempts: Genesis 3:5 ⁵For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

Exodus 20:1-5 ¹And God spoke all these words, saying, ²“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ³“You shall have no other gods before Me. ⁴“You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me,

Acts 12:23 ²³Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him down, because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and breathed his last.

That reality is located in our passage this morning: 1 Corinthians 1:29-31 ²⁹so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

But thirdly God also has **PERSISTENCE** in **demonstrating His glory**.

Philippians 2:6-11 ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

We see this persistence to demonstrate His glory in 4 key events:

- Incarnation
- Crucifixion
- Resurrection
- Coronation

So, how did God go about this plan?

2. **THE PROCEDURES GOD CHOSE TO EMPLOY**

First, **His call** contradicted human reason: 1 Corinthians 1:26 ²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

God does not call the qualified – He qualifies those He calls! That is not how we go about it – but it is God’s way, to call and then graciously transform the called.

Second, **His choice** confounded human resources. 1 Corinthians 1:27 ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;

We see that throughout biblical history:

- The children of Israel confounded Egyptian pharaoh
- The cross of shame confounded the Jewish elite
- The Church of Christ confounded the Roman empire
- Christians of today confound political systems

And who does God use within His plan?

3. **THE PEOPLE GOD CHOSE TO USE:**

1 Corinthians 1:30-31 ³⁰ And because of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

Who does God choose to use?

- Those who are **related** to Him
 - o Of Him
 - o In Christ
- Those who are **right** with Him
 - o Righteousness
 - o Sanctification
 - o Redemption
- Those who are **rejoicing** in Him

Jeremiah 9:23-24 ²³ Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, ²⁴ but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.”

Friends, this morning we come once more to the table that reminds us of events that looked foolish, humiliating and devastating, but wherein God’s plan for this world was worked out in time and history, once for all to provide the power for transformation from darkness to light, from hell to heaven, from lostness to adoption into God’s family.

This morning is settled faith, rest on these realities that our Sovereign God has a plan that is not ‘foolish’ but greater than all the wisdom of man, and boast in that we understand and know God – our Saviour and our God!