

**Message #7****I Corinthians 1:26-31**

We must keep our context in mind as we approach this section as the conjunction “for” (1:26) grammatically forces us to do.

One question Paul knew the Corinthians would raise would be “If preaching God’s Word and Christ’s cross is truly the wisdom and power of God, why is it that we don’t see too many wise and powerful people of our area responding to this preaching?”

**THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WHOM GOD CHOOSES AND SAVES ARE NOT THOSE OF INTELLECTUAL, POLITICAL OR SOCIAL NOTORIETY, BECAUSE GOD CHOOSES AND SAVES PEOPLE TO GLORIFY HIMSELF AND TO MAKE A STATEMENT FOR HIMSELF.**

**REALIZATION #1** – Realize who it is that does the saving. **1:26-28, 30**

There are three key words in this section that strongly emphasize this realization: 1) The noun “calling” (1:26); 2) the verb “chosen” (1:27, 28); 3) the preposition “by” (1:30).

The noun “calling” is the Greek word that, according to G. Abbott-Smith, the lexicographer, ALWAYS refers to God’s divine call and invitation to salvation (*Greek Lexicon*, p. 249). No one can come to salvation without this divine invitation, as Christ Himself said, “...no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father” (John 6:65).

The verb “chosen” (1:27, 28) is a Greek word that refers to the divine choice God makes in choosing the person He saves (*Ibid.*, p. 139). Paul, in using this word, is specifically stating that it is God who makes the selection of the one He will save.

The prepositional phrase “by His doing” (1:30) is a (Greek prepositional) phrase that literally means God is the divine source of salvation. It is all of Him, out of Him and from Him. Combined, these three words powerfully communicate that N.T. salvation is totally from God. In fact, both the O.T. and the N.T. testify of the theological reality that “salvation belongs to the LORD” (i.e. Ps. 3:8).

**REALIZATION #2** – Realize who it is that God doesn’t save. **1:26**

Paul says take a look around your church, brothers and sisters, and notice who isn’t in it.

**Class #1** - God doesn’t save too many who are wise. **1:26a**

The phrase “wise according to the flesh” means God does not typically save those who are extremely intelligent in worldly wisdom and philosophy. God does not generally save those who are humanistically and philosophically brilliant.

**Class #2** - God doesn't save too many who are mighty. **1:26b**

That word "mighty" refers to someone very powerful in this world's estimation. You won't find too many big name politicians, entertainers, athletes or entrepreneurs in your fellowship because God doesn't save too many of them.

**Class #3** - God doesn't save too many who are noble. **1:26c**

The word "noble" refers to one well-born into a family of nobility, a person of royalty. We must be very careful not to change the word "many" into the word "any," for in this very church God did save some who were of noble descent.

**REALIZATION #3** – Realize who it is that God does save. **1:27-28**

**Type #1** - God does save many who are foolish. **1:27a**

The word "foolish" indicates that God saves the type of person that the world views as moronic. The word implies that the world views this one as sluggish and dull of mind.

**Type #2** - God does save many who are weak. **1:27b**

He loves to save and develop people who were sick, without strength and very feeble. He loves to save those who needed a crutch.

**Type #3** - God does save many who are base. **1:28a**

The word "base" refers to one who is insignificant. God does not save too many significant people of this world. He loves to save and develop those who are insignificant.

**Type #4** - God does save those who are despised. **1:28b**

The word "despised" refers to one who is viewed in a contemptible manner. God delights in saving those who were depraved, wretched sinners.

**Type #5** - God does save many who are nobodies. **1:28c**

God delights in those who appear to be a zero in life. God delights in choosing the "things that are not."

**REALIZATION #4** – Realize why God does not save too many impressive people. **1:27-29**

**Reason #1** - To shame the wise. **1:27a**

The word "shame" means that God delights in saving hurting, lowly sinners so that those who think they are so honorable will eventually be brought to dishonor and disgrace.

**Reason #2** - To shame the strong. **1:27b**

Dr. Richard Lenski writes here in this world these strong people will strut in high honor, but this strutting is all a hollow show, about to burst like a bubble the moment they face God.

**Reason #3** - To nullify things present. **1:28b**

The word “nullify” is one that means to abolish, to render inoperative or to make invalid.

**Reason #4** – To prevent any boasting. **1:29**

The reason why God will not save too many successful people is so that no one will ever be able to boast or brag about their own self-achievement in His presence.

**REALIZATION #5** – Realize how this should affect the believer. **1:30-31**

**Recognition #1** - Recognize our position in Jesus Christ. **1:30**

The wise believer will be one who recognizes that everything he has and he is, is from God through Jesus Christ.

**Recognition #2** - Recognize our purpose in life. **1:31**

I like what J. A. Bengal said, “We cannot glory before Him, but we can glory in Him.” The purpose for God saving us was so that we could glorify and boast about Him, His work, His Son, and His grace.

There are two very interesting biblical principles that are given in Scripture concerning those whom God does not save:

- 1) God does not save people when they reach a certain level of sin (i.e. Rom. 1).
- 2) God does not save people when they reach a certain level of success (I Cor. 1).

Oh dear friend, if your heart has been moved today, please yield to God. Put aside your pride and your success and admit your sin and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. He is the ONLY way to being right with God. Your religion, your accomplishments, your work may impress men, but it won't impress God. He is interested in what you did with His Son Jesus—did you accept Him or reject Him?

If you are saved, you have been saved to glorify God. Does your life fulfill this purpose? Are you glorifying God or yourself?