

That no flesh should glory in his presence...He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

Perhaps the key to this whole passage, if not the whole letter, is contained in these statements (verses 29 & 31). The whole letter is written to expose and correct their fleshly manner of life and restore them to a spiritual life with the Lord. For instance, note the divisions among them (ch 1- 2); their toleration of open immorality (ch. 5), their going to court over personal disputes (ch. 6), their irreverence at the Lord's supper (ch, 11), their misuse of gifts (ch. 12 - 14), even their ignorance about their coming resurrection (ch.15) were due to an underlying carnality in life. Chapter three speaks to this more directly.

"And I brethren could not speak to you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal.(v. 1).

This carnality (fleshly, natural) among them was evident in their exaltation of human wisdom, human reasoning and human eloquence. Yet Paul points out that they weren't selected by God to be saved because of any personal qualifications. They weren't chosen because of their personal attractiveness or their natural abilities. They weren't chosen for their superior knowledge or their deep wisdom. They weren't even wise enough to seek, much less search out, the means of salvation on their own. Those that believe are saved through the "foolishness" of the preaching (v. 21). Not many of them that had become believers were wise after the flesh. That is, no man on the street would have looked to them as "wise" before they were saved, much less after. Not many of them were naturally "mighty." Not many "noble." None of these attributes which people admire are particularly appealing to God. Certainly not warrant for Him to send His only begotten to die for. The Lord Jesus pointed this out:

Matthew 19:23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. 24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. 25 When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? 26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things

Vs 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: WISDOM, God's wisdom now, not our own natural, human wisdom. James 3:13-18.

RIGHTEOUSNESS, God's righteousness, not our own. Romans 1:16-17; 3:10-11, 20-26.

SANCTIFICATION, God having set us apart, holy (and wholly) unto Himself, now we are to become sanctified in our daily lives by the truth. John 17:16-20; (v.17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.)

REDEMPTION, Redeemed by the blood of His Own [Son]. Acts 20:28. Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb without spot or blemish, not by silver or gold. 1Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 1:5.

are possible.

And some of the Corinthians believers were indeed naturally "wise" or "mighty" or "noble." Saved by God's grace, not human merit. Yet this was perhaps a source of trouble among them. Those that were naturally wise or mighty or noble among them were being given undue recognition. Read James 2:1-9;

James 2:1 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.

2 For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; 3 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: 4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? 5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? 6 But ye have despised the poor. Romans 2:11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

Deuteronomy 1:17 Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it.

1 Timothy 5:21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

Some, perhaps, were even seeking preeminence.

Years later a man named Diotrephes did that (3 John). (Where he lived is not given but it could easily have been Corinth, as he fits the mold of their thinking when Paul wrote this first letter to them. That is where they were headed anyway.)

But God has provided something much better than personal prominence. Here is the "rest of the story:" It is what God had made Christ to be to them, and to us! See verse 30. It's our position in Christ. Now let's live it!