

(1 Corinthians) the Humbling of the World

by Brian Brodersen

Brian Brodersen's sermon emphasizes God's choice of the foolish and weak to confound the wise, highlighting the gospel's relevance to the marginalized and the need for the church to return to its roots.

Duration: 49:06

Scripture: Jeremiah 9:23-24, Matthew 6:33, James 2:1-5

Topics: "Pride And Humility", "Gods Sovereignty"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of pride and the desire for recognition and reputation among the believers. He rebukes the idea of reinterpreting the gospel as a philosophy and setting up apostles as competing philosophers. The speaker emphasizes that the gospel of Jesus Christ is not a philosophy but a revelation. He gives examples from the Bible, such as the story of the Israelites marching around the city of Jericho and the liberation of the Israelites by Gideon, to illustrate how God's strategies often defy human logic and reasoning.

Transcript

Verse 26, chapter one of the first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul says, For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. 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, and the base things of the world, and the things which are despised, God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption, that as it is written, he who glories, let him glory in the Lord.

Many of the believers in Corinth had begun to want the approval of the society around them. They wanted to be seen as wise and in fashion. They wanted to be seen as intelligent and sophisticated in their quest to obtain this kind of reputation.

They reinterpreted the gospel as a philosophy and set up some of the apostles as competing philosophers. The first four chapters of this epistle are a lengthy rebuke of that pride that had caused them to compromise the gospel. The gospel of Jesus Christ is not a philosophy, but rather a revelation.

A philosophy is something that allows for speculation, debate, modification, expansion. But revelation, on the other hand, is something to be declared, believed and obeyed. The apostles were not philosophers peddling their own opinions, but heralds proclaiming the message entrusted to them.

Now, in the verses before us, Paul reminds the Corinthians of God's obvious contempt. For all that man prides himself in. As demonstrated in his passing over the important people of the world and choosing instead those whom the world considers nothing like to give you a quote from Charles Spurgeon, he said, It is clear to everyone who will observe either scripture fact that God never did intend to make his gospel fashionable.

That the very last thing that was ever in his thoughts was to select the elite of mankind and gather dignity for his truth from the gaudy trappings of rank and station. On the contrary, God has thrown down the gauntlet against all the pride of manhood. He had dashed mire into the face of all human excellency.

And with the battle of his strength, he has dashed the shield of man's glory into. Spurgeon had such a way with words as we look at our text. The first thing that we notice is that God's ways are much different than our ways.

Notice what it says. God has chosen the foolish, the weak, the base, the despised and the things that are not. This has always been God's way of doing things.

As you look at. Biblical history, you find that this is the way God has worked, he's always chosen to do things almost completely the opposite of how man would have done them. Think for a moment about.

The people of Israel themselves, God chose this people to become his people, he chose this nation and he reminded them that his choosing of them was not because they were. The largest nation, it wasn't because they were the most brilliant nation, it wasn't because they were the most righteous nation, it wasn't because they were the most powerful nation. God said, quite the contrary.

You were the smallest of the nations. So God chose this people to be his people that would have never been chosen if man was the one doing the choosing. When God sent his people Israel into conquer the land of Canaan.

The first city they encountered was a city of Jericho, the method that God used to conquer Jericho again illustrates this principle. As the people are going to conquer this walled city, God gives them instruction on how it's to be accomplished. And it wasn't anything like they would have thought there was no great military strategy in a sense.

What God said to them was simply this. You're to go and you are to march around the city silently for six days. And on the seventh day, you're to march around the city seven times.

And once you've completed the seventh time around, you're to blow the trumpet. Long and hard, and when you blow the trumpet, the walls of the city will fall down. How unlike man.

What kind of a strategy is that march around the city silently? But that is exactly what God told them to do. And we see there once again, that principle illustrated God doing things completely the opposite of way of the way that men would do them. Think a little bit further in the history of Israel.

We come to the Israelites being in the land, but now being under the dominion of the Midianites. And so God is going to liberate them. And he appears to a man named Gideon.

And Gideon is threshing grain and he's hiding for fear of the Midianites. And the Lord appears to him and he says, Go, you mighty man of valor, go in your strength and deliver Israel. And Gideon's response is something like this.

You must have the wrong address. I'm I'm not a mighty man of valor. But the Lord said, No, go, I will be with you.

And Gideon, of course. Is doubtful about all of this, so he goes through a couple of means of testing whether or not God is really leading. But when he finally becomes convinced that God is calling him to do this, he gathers an army together.

And as he gathers this army together, the Lord speaks to him and says, Gideon, there are too many men with you. Now they were going up against an army of probably close to five hundred thousand. But the Lord speaks to Gideon and he says there are too many with you.

If I were to give victory to Israel. With this many men, they would somehow attribute it to their own strength. So he said, tell the people this.

If there's anyone that's afraid. If there's anyone that's recently married, if there's anyone who has intended to their business at home, if there's anyone that for any reason at all doesn't really want to go to battle, tell them that they're free to go home. So that day, twenty two thousand men.

Left. And ten thousand remained. So they're going up against approximately five hundred thousand.

They've got an army of ten thousand and the Lord once again appears and says, Gideon, the men that are with you are too many. Now take him down to the brook and God gave them a little test by which he was going to thin the crowd out once again. And when it all was finished, Gideon was left with three hundred men.

And the Lord said, now. Now you're ready to go to battle, but when you go into battle, don't bother to take weapons. Instead, this is what I want you to do.

So the Lord instructs them to take these ceramic pots and these torches and things, and they're basically to go out against the Midianites and make a lot of noise. And as they make this noise, God is going to use this noise to frighten the Midianites. And they're going to become so confused, they're actually going to end up fighting with each other.

And the Israelites are never even going to have to fight. The Midianites are going to slay one another. But what kind of a battle plan is that? That's a little more absurd than even marching around the city of Jericho.

But again, we see that principle God doing things so much differently than man would do them when it comes to the choosing of a king for the nation. God says to the prophet Samuel, go down to the house of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, for I have chosen from among his sons one to be king. So Samuel makes preparation, he goes to Bethlehem, he gathers Jesse and his family together, and Jesse's eldest son is brought before him first.

And as Samuel sees him, he says, surely this is the Lord's anointed Eliab. He was a strong, handsome, kingly looking young man. And Samuel's excited about the prospect of a new king.

Surely this is the Lord's anointed. And the Lord speaks to him and says, this is not the man that I've chosen. And then he said to Samuel, he said, for man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks upon the heart.

And so he goes through the list of sons, seven sons in total. And yet there's no king. Finally, Samuel says to Jesse, do you have any other children? And Jesse said, oh, yes, well, my youngest son is out tending the sheep.

There he is out there. But surely he couldn't be the one that you're interested in. But yet Samuel said, call him in.

And as David walked in this young boy, the shepherd boy, the Lord spoke to Samuel and said, this is the one anoint him. But you see, he was the one that would not have been chosen if it was up to man, but he was the one that God chose. Now, when Jesus came into the world, this is where we see.

This principle demonstrated in its fullest sense. Think about this. When Jesus Christ came into the world, the son of God, the king of kings, the heir of the universe.

He's not born in a palace in Rome, which was the capital of the world at that time, nor was he even born in Jerusalem, which was the religious capital of the world. But rather, he was born in Bethlehem. A fairly insignificant place, and then he was brought up in a city of Nazareth, which was not only insignificant, but in many ways contemptible.

He was brought up as a carpenter, not as a prince in a palace. We see this demonstrated so clearly in the life of Jesus, this this principle of God choosing the foolish things of the world to bring to shame the things that are wise, God choosing the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. And then, of course, when Jesus was making his choice for those who would be his disciples, those that he would pass the task of spreading his message to the world on to.

It's interesting that Jesus did not go to the doctors of the day. He did not go to the universities and find the most educated. As a matter of fact, I think if we could just visualize it for a moment, Jesus literally bypassed those people.

And instead, he went to the fishermen. He went to a man who was a tax collector. He went to a man who was a patriot.

A revolutionary. He went to the ordinary people of the day, and it was from that group that he called out those who would follow him and those who would eventually spread his message throughout the world. And in doing so, again, he was showing his contempt for all that the world prides itself in.

You see, when Jesus came. Those who deem themselves important. They thought they they thought, surely, if he's the Messiah, he's going to acknowledge us because we are the people.

We are the important people. And the fact that Jesus bypassed them, will it cause them to conclude that he can't be the Messiah? Because if he were, he would acknowledge our greatness. If he were really the Messiah, he would commend us.

He would be looking from among our lot for someone to follow him. And and they held him in contempt because he passed them by, and instead he went to the common man, he went to the the working class of the day, if you will. Jesus is the true champion of the working class.

And it's such a distortion of reality to. Say anything contrary to that, Jesus is the true champion of the working class. Listen to the words of Jesus.

He said, The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed. Jesus came into the world to reach out primarily to the oppressed, to those who were overlooked, to those who were thought as insignificant.

The term the apostle uses here when he speaks of that that group of men who were not. And God has chosen the things that were not to bring to nothing, the things that are. That is a term that speaks of absolute insignificance.

So, in other words, God has chosen the people whom the world considers absolutely insignificant. Those are the ones that God has chosen to do his work among. Listen again to what Jesus said.

He said this in response to a question that was presented to him about whether or not he was the Messiah. And the question had come from John the Baptist, who was a bit concerned at this point because he had an idea of what the Messiah was going to do, but it wasn't accurate and therefore he was thinking that perhaps he had made a mistake. Because John, like so many others, was thinking that the Messiah was going to bring liberation from the Roman oppression, but Jesus spoke to John's disciples and he said, Go tell John the things you have seen and heard that the blind see the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf here, the dead are raised and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

And blessed is he who is not offended in me. Listen also to what James said in his epistle. He said, My brethren do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, with partiality, for if there should come into your assembly, a man with gold rings and fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, You sit here in a good place and say to the poor man, you stand over there or sit here at my footstool.

Have you not shown partiality among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brethren, has not God chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into courts? Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called? You see, all throughout the scriptures, we have this picture being presented that Jesus came primarily to the poor of this world. Those who are oppressed, those who are neglected, those who are despised, those who are considered nothing.

Karl Marx, he used the term proletariat to refer to the working class. He and those who followed his philosophy set themselves up as the champions of the proletariat. That word proletariat originally referred to the lowest class in Roman society.

I think that's interesting, referred to the lowest class in Roman society. That was the very society that Jesus came to. That was the very society that the apostles went out and ministered to.

Our text is describing the proletariat, and it says these are the ones that God has chosen. See, Jesus is really the working man's hero, and it's so absurd when you take into consideration that he has been virtually moved out of the picture by certain philosophers as having any relevance to the working man. But you see, if you look at what the scriptures say, if you base your conclusions on the biblical revelation, it's clear that Jesus is the working man's hero and that the gospel is a message primarily to the working class.

And it's time for the gospel to be put back into the hands of the common man. It was a sad day in the history of the church when it became a center of prestige and power. A very sad and pathetic day when position in the church went to the highest bidder and the rich and famous were given preferential treatment.

When the pulpit was reserved for the academic, all of this kind of thing is in direct opposition to the clear teaching of scripture and is actually a capitulation to the very same things that Paul was warning the Corinthians about. You see what Paul warned the Corinthians about so long ago. This desire to be seen as fashionable, this desire to be seen as sophisticated, intelligent, wise, important, this desire for power.

This desire to be looked favorably upon. This is the very thing that the church at a point in history capitulated to. And this is what has caused.

So many to despise the church of Jesus Christ and without having accurate information, assume that this is what the Bible teaches. I mean, isn't it always assumed that the Bible teaches more of a conservative point of view in the sense of, you know, the Bible is in support of capitalism. The Bible is against socialism, things of this nature.

Well, those are distortions. The Bible doesn't really address either one of those things. The Bible certainly talks about justice.

The Bible talks about equity. The Bible talks about deliverance for the poor. The Bible also talks about human responsibility.

The Bible talks about a person being responsible for themselves and so forth. But but the you know, so often the scriptures are cast in the light of, you know, Christianity is for the upper classes. There's no compassion among church people for the lower classes and so forth.

Well, the problem is people are interpreting Christianity from what they've seen in a church that's departed from the scriptures rather than from what's revealed in the scriptures themselves. That's why I always emphasize we have to get back to what the Bible says. And you see, when you start talking about the Bible presenting the gospel as the answer to the problems of the poor man, when you start talking about Jesus being the champion of the working class and things like that, people will say, oh, but what about what the church did in such and such a place? And in many ways, it is true that Lennon and people like that were seeking to liberate people from the oppression of the church.

But we have to understand this. Whatever the church wasn't doing or whatever the church was doing, it wasn't what the Bible said the church ought to do. And that's where the distinction needs to be made between what the church has done and what the Bible actually teaches.

Whenever the church is oppressed people, whenever position in the church has been sold to the highest bidder. Whenever the church is held a position of power or prestige in the society and oppressed and dominated people, you can know this for sure, that church has nothing to do with Christianity, regardless

of what they might say about themselves. That's why we have to always interpret Christianity from what the Bible says.

Now, people always want to refer to church history. And my answer to that is why bother? I'm not interested in church history. I am to some degree, but I'm not in another sense.

In the sense that, well, the church did this or or did that, whatever they were doing back then, if it was right and good, well, we might want to emulate that to some degree. But if it was wrong. Well, then we must admit, yes, it was wrong, but it wasn't wrong because that's what the Bible taught them to do.

It was wrong because they themselves ignored the scriptures. And went off in another direction. Now, as I said a moment ago, I believe that God wants to do something.

Once again, among the common people, and it's interesting when you look at the history of true revival, you find that generally speaking, revival impacts the common man. What God does is he takes his truth and just as he's always done, he brings it right down to the people that he intended it to be for primarily. And he raises up men who can reach the common man.

When you look at the history of revival in this country, that's what happens so often. Those who were even being oppressed by the church to some degree or neglected or ignored, God would send his servants to minister to them. And then he would actually raise up a whole new work out of that common class of people.

The Methodist revival under Wesleyan Whitfield did that very thing. These were men who had a position in the church and yet at the same time. Saw the need for the common man to be ministered to, and as they went out and preached the gospel to the poor, they ended up being rejected by their own church and subsequently a new movement was developed where the common man was involved.

There was a place for the laborer. To also possibly even become a preacher, a pastor, a teacher of the word and things like that, and as you look at the various revivals in the history of the church, you find that that is essentially what's happened, and that's what happened when Jesus came. There was that segregation at the time of Jesus.

There was that spiritual elite. Demonstrated in the life of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, but what does it say in the gospel? It says that the common people heard Jesus gladly. And I personally believe that there are multitudes of people in this country that if they simply knew the gospel.

In its truest form and saw it being demonstrated. In the lives of the common people, I believe that there are many people that would respond, and I think that a lack of interest in the gospel has to do with the misrepresentation that's been given of the gospel by so much of the church. And so I am of the conviction that God wants to raise up a new generation of men to reach the common man.

Men who are common, men who are like their neighbor, men from from that working class now. I come from that sort of a background in that sort of a history. And this is the very thing that we witnessed God doing in this.

Group of churches that were involved in the churches called Calvary Chapel. What we saw God begin to do was take. Just.

Ordinary people and put his hand upon them and begin to use them in a powerful way, much to the dismay of organized religion. And. We've had our fair share of criticism.

From the established church and many years ago, when Pastor Chuck Smith was being led by God to make some some real changes and real adjustments in his approach to the ministry, he received all kinds of flack from the existing religious hierarchy, even from people within his own church when he decided to open the door to the hippies at that time. Those young people who were disillusioned with. Society.

They had turned their backs on materialism and they were many of them living on the streets and involved in all kinds of sexual promiscuity and drug activity and so forth, and many of them living on the streets were filthy and all. But yet God began to work and he began to move upon their hearts. And of course, they needed to be ministered to.

They needed to be taught the word. And as they were invited and started coming to the church, there were a few people in the establishment who said, oh, no, no, we can't allow them in here unless they're willing to take a bath and put on some shoes. And some of the people actually protested and said, oh, they're going to ruin the new carpet.

And this is where Chuck. I think made one of the most strategic moves in church history when he said this, he said, then we'll pull the carpet out because they're coming in. And that opened the floodgate.

There were many in the established church who would not open the door to people like that in those days. And I think, unfortunately, that has been repeated over and over again, historically, even to this very day, there are churches that will not open the door to certain people, certain people will not feel welcomed. But yet I believe that God wants to do something about all of that, and I believe that God wants to raise up.

A new generation and one of the things that the Lord showed me is that. Well, of course, there's a famine for his word, but another thing the Lord showed me is that there is not a generation, a new generation of young men to take his word to the people. And as I've been able to have some experience over the past year, meet people and go to different places and so forth, what I've seen is that there are people still in the church in this country who are committed to the Bible, committed to the authority of the word and capable of communicating God's truths and so forth.

But yet, for the most part. Those who are like that are from a previous generation and many of them are even ready for retirement. And what we find is that there aren't a whole lot of men waiting in the ranks to step up and.

Take the work and to carry it on, and even among those who are capable and committed to Bible exposition and so forth, so often you find that even they themselves are trapped in certain traditional types of environments where the average person might not feel that they could even approach to such a place. Now, as I look at that, that to me is confirmation that God wants to do. Something.

In that he wants to touch lives, he wants to raise people up, he wants to bring up a new generation of preachers who can reach out to the common man because they come from that group themselves. There are so many people. Who? I think again, our disillusion with Christianity.

Not because of what Christianity is, but because of their interpretation of it. Because of what they've seen. They dislike it, they disapprove of it, but they haven't seen an accurate representation of it.

I was talking to a man some time ago and we were just having a conversation and. And in the course of the conversation, I was telling him a bit about myself, telling him a bit about my background. And, you know, I mentioned that, you know, I am a pastor and I've been in the ministry now for several years, but prior prior to that, I was involved in, you know, all kinds of different types of employment.

And one of the things that I did for the most part was in the field of construction, and actually I was. A plumber. And, you know, as we were talking about this, and I'm just having a conversation with this fellow and suddenly says, you know, I've never met a clergyman.

Who had ever done any common type of labor, and he said, I've never met a clergyman who'd ever worked with his hands before. And you actually used to build houses and dig ditches and things like that. And so, yeah, yeah, I did do that.

And he was absolutely amazed at that. Because it was something that he had never come into contact. Now he was, you know, a working class man.

And I could see as we talked that there was some sort of a bond that was developing. You know, the funny thing, how this even got going was we were over at some friend's house and we were we were out in the back garden and we were tossing around an American football. He had been a rugby player and I used to play American football, so we were tossing the ball around.

And the funniest things that God will use the fact that I could throw a football well, really impressed this guy. It's like now. Now, wait a minute.

This guy's a preacher, but he can throw that football really. I can't make the connection. You know, in his mind, it was like, no, preachers don't do things like this.

And to me, you know, I mean, to somebody else, that might not have been significant at all, but to me, as I listened to what he said, I could see that he was stumbled by a church that had failed to communicate the New Testament message. And it also showed me that there are multitudes of people just like that, that God wants to reach. God wants to touch people through your lives.

God isn't calling everyone here to become a preacher, to go out and plant a church or something like that. But eventually he might call some of you to do that. That you might go and reach the people that.

Can identify with you, God uses those kinds of things now. Again, going back to what I was saying previously about Calvary Chapel, this is the work that God has done, and I'm not here to toot the horn for Calvary Chapel. I think the genius of Calvary Chapel is simply this.

God led one man to take people back to the Bible. It's as simple as that. Some people ask, well, what's the great secret behind the growth of Calvary Chapel? And in the States or churches are very large and so forth.

And what's the great secret? Well, there's no secret to it really at all. One man just took a generation of people back to the Bible and they understand Christianity from the biblical point of view, which is really the only real Christianity. And we're just doing what the Bible says to do, being normal, everyday, ordinary people, but trusting that God wants to use us and work through our lives.

And God is doing a work. And I believe God wants to do the same thing. As I look at what I experienced, how just a handful of my own peers, we all grew up together.

We weren't Christians. We weren't thinking about God. We were living for ourselves, serving ourselves.

But one day the spirit of God swept through our lives and saved a number of us and established us in the faith and called us. And I can think of many people I know who are doing what I'm doing today all over the world. And and yet it was something that God just did in our lives.

And as I look at that and see what God did, my conviction is that what God did there, he can do anywhere in the world. And I don't know why he wouldn't want to do it right here. I think there are thousands of young men just like I was that God wants to lay hold of and use to reach the common man.

Therefore, we will pursue that and trust God with that conviction to do that work in us and through us. Now, moving on from there, a quick word on verse 26. Notice not many wise, according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble.

The Countess of Huntington, her name was Selina. She became an avid supporter of George Whitfield in his ministry. She was from the aristocracy.

And when she looked at this particular verse, she said, thank God that it doesn't say where you see your calling, brethren, that not any wise, not any mighty or any noble. And and we need to clarify that as well. There have certainly been people who have been great in the world's eyes who have become Christians.

There have been kings and prime ministers and presidents and great military leaders. And there have been great men of learning, great men, scientifically and of course, Christians have come from every walk of life. But quite honestly, the vast majority of Christians have been common people.

And that's the point that the apostles making now, not that God doesn't love everyone. He certainly does. He loves the rich and the mighty and the famous.

He loves them equally. But yet the problem is not with God's love or the availability of salvation. The problem is with man.

And of course, those who see themselves wise, according to the flesh, those who see themselves mighty, those who see themselves as noble generally do not see that they have any need for God. You see, their attitude is is something like this. Well, if there is a God and I'm rather doubtful about that, but if there is a God, he certainly will respect me because look how brilliant I am.

Or look how mighty I am or look at my pedigree. Look at my heritage. If there is a God, certainly he will acknowledge me.

See, that's why there are so few from that realm. It's because of human pride. Now, why has God done things this way? Well, Paul answers that for us.

Why has God done things that way? Well, let me ask you a question. Do you like a boaster? Do you like a person who snubs you? Do you enjoy being around the arrogant, those who look down their nose at you and say, oh, poor plebeian, too bad you weren't born into upper society? Or, oh, it's so sad that you're so ignorant, uneducated. I don't think there's anyone that really does like a boaster or an arrogant person.

Neither does God. The Bible says God resists the proud and he gives grace to the humble. God has done things the way he's done them for this reason, to humble the world.

To humble the world and to show man that all that he deems important, all that he puts his stock in, all that he values is all wrong and it's all contrary to the heart and the mind of God. God has done things this way to humble the world, to put man in his place. Oh, I know for sure that you can identify with this.

We all long to see a boaster put in his place. I remember the first fight between Tyson and Holyfield and all the boasting that was coming from Tyson's camp and all the talk about Holyfield. Oh, he's washed up and, you know, he's old and he never was really a great champion anyway.

And this young, vicious Tyson is going to just decapitate him in the first round and all of the boasting and all the bragging that was going on. And, you know, you just want, oh, is there any hope that something could be done? And then when Holyfield ends up winning the fight, oh, great justice has been served. The arrogant has been humbled.

The proud mouth has been stopped. We all delight in seeing the arrogant humble. Well, you see, God is humbling the world.

In order. That when it's all said and done, there will be no boasting. Except in the Lord himself, Paul makes reference to Jeremiah.

Nine, twenty three and twenty four, and I want to close by reading the passage from Jeremiah. Thus says the Lord. Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom.

Let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches, but let him who glories glory in this that he understands and knows me that I am the Lord exercising loving kindness. Judgment and righteousness in the earth, for in these I delight, says the Lord. See, that's what it's all about.

God has humbled the world. And in the end, the only boasting that will take place is boasting in the Lord. When it's all said and done, we are all going to simply give praise and glory and honor to God.

Wouldn't heaven be a miserable place if there were a load of boasters there? You arrive there on the heavenly scene and someone says, now, what did you do to obtain heaven? Say, well, I did this and that. Oh, well, you will definitely have a lower position here than I do, because you know what I did to get here? I wouldn't be a miserable environment to have to live eternally in. No, when it's all over and we're all there in heaven.

Whatever we've even done or accomplished for the Lord on the earth, you know what we're going to say? Praise the Lord. Glory to God. As I think of myself as a as a man who wants to serve God and as I think of other people that I know like that and even as I survey the long history of the church, I look at the men that God has used.

You know what you find in the end? You find that every one of them are thoroughly human. And that really whatever God does do. At the end of the day, we'll find that he did it in spite of us, not because of us.

Even God using me. It's not because I am I pray more than anyone else. I meditate on the Bible.

I'm so loving. I'm so God can't help but use me. No, that that just isn't true.

My wife can attest to that. There have been times when I've tried to figure out why God used me and the Lord has spoken to me and said, don't don't try. You'll be really you'll be really disappointed when you find out.

It's not because of us. You know, so often even, you know, as Christian people, we want to exalt a man. We want to put someone up on a pedestal and say, oh, pastor, so and so, or or this.

Oh, they're such a person of God. And oh, yes, God uses him. Oh, they're so spiritual and so forth.

Well, no, that really isn't it. It's not my spirituality that causes God to use me. And I don't think that that is even the case with anybody ever in the history of the church.

Because on our best day, we're still sinners. And it's the grace of God. So when it's all said and done, I won't be there in heaven saying, well, you know, I got this seat right over here, pretty close to Jesus, isn't it? Because, you know, when I was on Earth, I really prayed and you guys, you know, I noticed your prayer life was a bit weak.

I studied my Bible when you did. And you know how many people I witnessed to? Even as Christians, we get caught up in boasting these kinds of things, don't we? But really, as God uses us, and I know for myself, as God uses me, you know what it does? It just humbles me. It just shows me the goodness of God, because I know myself and I know that if it was based upon my performance, I couldn't be used at all.

It's based upon the grace of God so that at the end, the glory goes back to God. Thanks be to God for his mercy, for his glory, for his grace. And let me close with this word of encouragement.

I say that to let you know not to encourage carnality. Of course, we want to press on. We want to become godly people.

But even on your best day, you're still a sinner and. Here's the good news, in spite of all that, God loves you and he wants to use you with all of your imperfections, you might say, well, you know, I'd love to be used by the Lord, but but he can't use me. Yes, he can.

He uses sinful people. It's not a matter of human perfection, it's a matter of humbling ourselves before God, recognizing our weaknesses, crying out to God for mercy and thanking him for his grace that enables us to be used. And so God has humbled the world.

He's humbled the world. And there are many, many from that group, those that the world deems foolish, those that the world deems as nothing that God, even in the future, wants to use to confound man and to turn his world upside down over and over again.

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