

## THE CHOOSER AND THE CHOSEN

### I. 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

A. 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 (NIV) is written to that same hot mess church we read about a couple weeks ago...

1) **V18: 18** *For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (You probably already know this but there are people out there that think Christians are idiots, fools, and dumber than coal buckets! And yet once you realize you've been saved by the One who took our sins upon Himself on the cross, you realize the power of being rescued from death to life! Like the DC Talk lyrics: "What will people think when they hear that I'm a Jesus Freak? What will people do when they find that it's true? I don't really care if they label me a Jesus Freak; there ain't no disguising the truth.") (Is that still not one great song?!)*

2) **V19-23: 19** *For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." (Isaiah 29:14) 20* *Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? (A million times over!) 21* *For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know Him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. 22* *Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, 23* *but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, (Jews: 'The Miracle Worker you claim was Messiah couldn't even save Himself--we watched Him die!' Greeks: 'How irrational to think this unschooled Galilean was God and Savior of all!')*

3) **V24-25: 24** *but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25* *For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength. (If in you are in Christ, regenerated, born anew, you get this! You've touched the power and authenticity of the Gospel! And deep down you know the Goos News about Jesus is not snake oil!)*

4) **V26-31: (These next verses speak to us...)** **26** *Brothers, (and sisters) think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27* *But **God chose** the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; **God chose** the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28* ***He chose** the lowly things of this world and the despised things--and the things that are not--to nullify the things that are, 29* *so that no one may boast before Him. 30* *It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God--that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. 31* *Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."*

B. So now you realize you weren't chosen by God because you were a somethin'-somethin' but rather because you were a nothin'-nothin'! You weren't chosen because you were filthy rich, drop dead gorgeous, or a brainiac genius. Not chosen because you were an artistic prodigy. Not chosen because of special lineage or royal blood. Not chosen because you were the "must-have-toy" for Christmas, but because you were stranded on the Island of Misfit Toys! Spiritual poverty vs impressive pedigrees kindled God's mercy and stirred His love! God chose and chooses the dumb & dumber, the weak and lowly, the poor and needy, the untouchables and undesirables. Like Jacob, God

chooses the spotted, speckled, and black sheep to grace His flocks! The CHOOSER chose you! But not for nothing! Not chosen for lollygagging but to be God's children!

C. You may say: "*But I'm too young!*" And yet so many of those in the Bible whom God called were young. Joshua, Samuel, David, Josiah--all young. Jesus' disciple John, Timothy, John Mark--all young. Listen to a couple Proverbs...

1) **Proverbs 14:4** (NET) says: *4 Where there are no oxen, the feeding trough is clean, but an abundant harvest is produced by strong oxen. (This is not only true for livestock, it's true for youth. "Where there are no youth, the church stays clean, but the can-do presence of young people, on fire for God, is dynamic and infectious!")*

2) **Proverbs 20:29** (AMP) says: *29 The glory of young men is their [physical] strength, and the honor of aged men is their gray head [representing wisdom and experience]. (Old men tell great stories. And if you listen to those grand tales, you can glean lots of wisdom; not only what to do in certain situations but what not to do. But young men and women bring a level of strength, energy, and vitality that's invigorating. We have a Legacy Room in the Chapel basement, but many of you can barely walk down the stairs to check it out. Young people might decide to buy up the land next door, build on, create bigger and more accessible space, and legacies keep on expanding...)*

D. **1 Timothy 4:12** (NIV) should be underlined in every young person's Bible: *12 Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.*

E. You may say: "*But I'm too old!*" And yet the Bible's full of the exploits of the elderly. When Moses climbed up (not carried up!) Mt. Nebo to die, **Deuteronomy 34:1a & 7** (ESV) tells it like this: *1a Then Moses climbed Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab to the top of Pisgah, across from Jericho. There the Lord showed him the whole land...7 Moses was 120 years old when he died. His eye was undimmed, and his vigor unabated. (That young disciple, John, former son of thunder, eventually became very old. As mentioned a couple weeks ago, when they carried this elderly saint into gatherings and asked him to share a few words, his feeble lips exhorted over and over: "Love one another! Love one another!" But here's a few choice verses for the grayish amongst us...*

1) **First a Precept: Leviticus 19:32** (NIV) *32 Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the LORD.*

2) **Then a Proverb: Proverbs 16:31** (ESV) *31 Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life.*

3) **Then a Prayer: Psalm 71:18** (NLT) *18 Now that I am old and gray, do not abandon me, O God. Let me proclaim Your power to this new generation, Your mighty miracles to all who come after me.*

4) **Then a Promise: Isaiah 46:4** (VOICE) *4 And when you are old, I will still be there, carrying you. When your limbs grow tired, your eyes are weak, and your hair a silvery gray, I will carry you as I always have. I will carry you and save you.*

F. When we started our church, my Dad was 64 and my Mom was 53. They were the eldest amongst us. Leaving their more traditional church to help with this emergent plant meant changes and sacrifices. Mom's transition was easier as she'd long taught Sunday School and that role continued. Dad gave up singing in the choir which for him was a huge sacrifice. Instead however, he took on the sound & recording efforts, learning how to do so on the fly. Sometime later he started writing encouraging notes to folks in church. Mom & Dad carved out ways to serve. I have no doubt that you can do the same. Maybe you'll start visiting others who can't get out. Maybe call and encourage folks over the phone. Maybe come pray with us on Wednesday night.

G. So like at Thanksgiving Dinner, we make room for grandpa & grandma, set up highchairs for the babies, card tables for the kiddos, and make ample room for everyone else. The cooks eat. The cleaner-uppers eat. Football watchers eat! Everybody eats!

H. Some might say: "*We're just too small!*" But here's some wisdom--revel in your smallness; don't despise it. **Zechariah 4:10**: "*Do not despise the day of small beginnings...*" In God's economy, the smaller the better. The famous preacher, **D.L. Moody** said: "Small numbers make no difference to God. There is nothing small if God is in it." **Only possess 5 smooth stones? Keep your slingshot handy! Only have a jar of oil and a handful of flour? Bake some bread! Only have a couple copper coins? Give them generously! Only have a sack lunch with five rolls and a couple fish? Put them in the hands of Jesus! Only have a very old self or a very young self or a very weak and limited self? Put that self in the hands of Jesus and see what He might do with you!**

I. Professor and author, **Joe Rigney** writes to small ones like us: "Be comforted, small one, in your smallness. He lays no merit upon you. The weight of the world is not yours. It was borne by Another, by One whose bloody shoulders were able to bear it--up to Golgotha, into the tomb, down to Sheol, and then out, out again into the light of resurrection. Have no fear, small one. Bear the load that is yours with humility, like a weaned child, as one who hopes in the Lord forevermore."

J. The renowned reformer, **John Calvin** said this: "Let us not cease to do the utmost, that we may incessantly go forward in the way of the Lord; and let us not despair of the smallness of our accomplishments."

\* Close with Prayer...

\* **Isaiah 40:28-31** (ESV) ushers us all home: **28** *Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; His understanding is unsearchable. 29 He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might He increases strength. 30 Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; 31 but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.*

## **[Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff](#)**

### **[1 Corinthians 1:18-31](#) (NIV)**

**18** For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. **19** For it is written: *"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate."* **20** Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? **21** For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know Him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. **22** Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, **23** but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, **24** but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. **25** For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength. **26** Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. **27** But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. **28** He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things--and the things that are not--to nullify the things that are, **29** so that no one may boast before Him. **30** It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God--that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. **31** Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

#### **Proverbs 14:4 (NET)**

**4** Where there are no oxen, the feeding trough is clean, but an abundant harvest is produced by strong oxen.

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**31** Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life.

#### **Psalms 71:18 (NLT)**

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### **Quote by D.L. Moody**

"Small numbers make no difference to God. There is nothing small if God is in it."

### **Quote by Joe Rigney**

"Be comforted, small one, in your smallness. He lays no merit upon you. The weight of the world is not yours. It was borne by Another, by One whose bloody shoulders were able to bear it — up to Golgotha, into the tomb, down to Sheol, and then out, out again into the light of resurrection. Have no fear, small one. Bear the load that is yours with humility, like a weaned child, as one who hopes in the Lord forevermore."

- Joe Rigney serves as a fellow of theology at New Saint Andrews College. He is a husband, a father of three, and the author of a number of books...

### **Quote by John Calvin**

"Let us not cease to do the utmost, that we may incessantly go forward in the way of the Lord; and let us not despair of the smallness of our accomplishments."

## **Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff**

**Little Things - Jon Jorgenson**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1gvrvtGyM>

**Do Not Despise the Day of Small Things - Scott Hubbard (Desiring God)**

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/do-not-despise-the-day-of-small-things>

**Small Things God Uses**

<http://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Small-Things-God-Uses>

**5 Ways to Be a Godly Grandparent - Avery Foley (Answers in Genesis)**

<https://answersingenesis.org/grandparents/five-ways-be-godly-grandparent/>

**Parent Love and Grandparent Love - Tim Challies**

<https://www.challies.com/articles/parent-love-and-grandparent-love/>

**Spoil the Grandkids? A Better Way Forward - John Piper - Desiring God**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0AgxWM1ipsU>

**On Roman Catholicism - R.C. Sproul (5 Messages) - Ligonier Ministries**  
<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/roman-catholicism>

### **Isaiah 46:4-9 (NIV)**

**4** Even to your old age and gray hairs I am He, I am He who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you. **5** With whom will you compare Me or count Me equal? To whom will you liken Me that we may be compared? **6** Some pour out gold from their bags and weigh out silver on the scales; they hire a goldsmith to make it into a god, and they bow down and worship it. **7** They lift it to their shoulders and carry it; they set it up in its place, and there it stands. From that spot it cannot move. Even though someone cries out to it, it cannot answer; it cannot save them from their troubles. **8** Remember this, keep it in mind, take it to heart, you rebels. **9** Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me.

### **Psalm 103:13-19 (NLT)**

**13** The LORD is like a Father to His children, tender and compassionate to those who fear Him. **14** For He knows how weak we are; He remembers we are only dust. **15** Our days on earth are like grass; like wildflowers, we bloom and die. **16** The wind blows, and we are gone--as though we had never been here. **17** But the love of the LORD remains forever with those who fear Him. His salvation extends to the children's children **18** of those who are faithful to His covenant, of those who obey His commandments! **19** The LORD has made the heavens His throne; from there He rules over everything.

### **Psalm 72:9-18 (NIV)**

**9** Do not cast me away when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength is gone. **10** For my enemies speak against me; those who wait to kill me conspire together. **11** They say, "God has forsaken him; pursue him and seize him, for no one will rescue him." **12** Do not be far from me, my God; come quickly, God, to help me. **13** May my accusers perish in shame; may those who want to harm me be covered with scorn and disgrace. **14** As for me, I will always have hope; I will praise You more and more. **15** My mouth will tell of Your righteous deeds, of Your saving acts all day long--though I know not how to relate them all. **16** I will come and proclaim Your mighty acts, Sovereign LORD; I will proclaim Your righteous deeds, Yours alone. **17** Since my youth, God, You have taught me, and to this day I declare Your marvelous deeds. **18** Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, my God, till I declare Your power to the next generation, Your mighty acts to all who are to come.

### **Deuteronomy 4:9 (NIV)**

**9** Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.

### **Deuteronomy 6:1-9 (NIV)**

**1** These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, **2** so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all His decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. **3** Hear, Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, promised you. **4** Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. **5** Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. **6** These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. **7** Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. **8** Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. **9** Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

### **Proverbs 17:6 (ESV)**

**6** Grandchildren are the crown of the aged, and the glory of children is their fathers.

### **Proverbs 13:22 (ESV)**

**22** A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, but the sinner's wealth is laid up for the righteous.

### **James 2:5-7 (NIV)**

**5** Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom He promised those who love Him? **6** But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? **7** Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of Him to whom you belong?

### **A Little Poem**

Author Unknown

Shamgar had an ox-goad,  
David had a sling,  
Samson had a jawbone,  
Rahab had a string,  
Mary had some ointment,  
Aaron had a rod,  
Dorcas had a needle,  
All were used for God.

### **Quote by C.S. Lewis**

"Resting in our smallness, we are delivered from fear, lest our shoulders should bear the weight of the world. This is the humility that keeps our backs from being broken by the weight of glory."

### **Quote by Jay Kessler**

"Young people need something stable to hang on to — a culture connection, a sense of their own past, a hope for their own future. Most of all, they need what grandparents can give them."

### **An Irish Blessing**

"Children are the rainbow of life. Grandchildren are the pot of gold."

### **Child of My Child**

Child of my child, heart of my heart.

Your smile bridges the years between us...

I am young again, discovering the world through your eyes.

You have the time to listen and I have the time to spend,

Delighted to gaze at familiar, loved features made new in you again.

Through you, I see the future. Through me, you'll see the past.

In the present, we'll love one another as long as these moments last.

- Author Unknown

### **Quote by Unknown Author**

"A grandparent has silver in their hair and gold in their heart."

### **Quote by Billy Graham**

"The greatest legacy one can pass on to one's grandchildren is not money or other material things accumulated in one's life, but rather a legacy of character and faith."

### **Quote by Ann Swindell**

"Greatness is smallness, servanthood, humility. It is not power, ideas, and influence."

### **Quote by Phillips Brooks**

"The true way to be humble is not to stoop until you are smaller than yourself, but to stand at your real height against some higher nature that will show you what the real smallness of your greatness is."

### **Aged Saint Thy Form is Bending**

Hannah Flagg Gould (1789 – 1865)

Aged man, with locks so hoary,

High estate dost thou possess!

They appear thy crown of glory,

In the way of righteousness.



Jewels, not of man's preparing,  
Form the shining diadem,  
Thou art from thy Sovereign wearing:  
God's own finger silvered them.

Thine are honors, proved and heightened  
By the gift of lengthened years;  
In affliction's furnace brightened,  
Tried by cares, and washed with tears.

Like thy Master, meek and lowly,  
Thou a thorny earth hast trod;  
With thy breast a high and holy  
Temple of the living God.

Aged saint, thy form is bending,  
Sere and withered, to the tomb;  
But thy spirit, upward tending,  
Budded for immortal bloom.

### **Dr. Criswell on Aging Saints**

by John MacArthur

Dr. Criswell at Dallas First Baptist tells of Robert G. Lee who was a great preacher in the south and Robert G. Lee on his 84th birthday, which was in 1970, November 11, was asked this question, "Are you going to keep on preaching, Dr. Lee?" This is what he replied: "When there are so many unsaved people around, when there are sorrowing hearts to be comforted, when so many young people are throwing away their life in folly's court and carnal pleasure's mart, when there are so many evils against which protest must be made, when so many old people are lonely on the sunset trail, when in 1910, at my ordination, I was married to preaching until death do us part, why should I not in the 85th year of my life keep on preaching?"

Dr. Lee added some fortifying statistics, by the way, that ought to bless and encourage any of you who are pushing 90 or 80. This is what he said: "Newman Darlan, a scholar of accepted standing, made an analysis of the lives and achievements of 400 foremost characters of history. The analysis showed that nearly 80% of the world's greatest figures closed active lives between 58 and 80. Twenty-five percent continued beyond 70, twenty-two and a half percent beyond 80, and six percent beyond 90.

Consider what has been done by men beyond 80. When 83, Gladstone, for the fourth time, became Prime Minister of Great Britain. Michelangelo, at 89, executed his Last Judgment, perhaps the most famous single picture in the world. John Wesley preached with almost undiminished eloquence at 88...closing at that remarkable age, the most remarkable career of his time, having traveled a quarter of a million miles in an age that

knew neither electricity nor steam, and he had delivered, someone estimated, 4,000 sermons and written volumes and volumes of books. Edison was inventing at 90. Wright, at 90, was considered a creative architect. Shaw was writing plays at 90. Grandma Moses was painting at 80. J.C. Penny, the great Christian, was working strenuously at his desk at 95."

- John McArthur, *Grace To You*, Excerpt from, "Daniel in the Lion's Den."

## **God Loves to Use the Small Things**

By Dr. Joe McKeever

<http://www.crosswalk.com/church/pastors-or-leadership/god-loves-to-use-the-small-things-11640345.html>

I put a note on Facebook this week to say I'm working on a sermon on this theme, based on Zechariah 4:10, "*Who has despised the day of small things?*" I asked the question, "*What small things have you seen God use? Think of things I may have overlooked.*"

The answers are still coming in. A song. A flower. A little boy's lunch. A baby in a manger. A teenage mother. A star. A cup of water. A couple of coins in the offering from a widow. Mustard seed.

Any sermon on the subject I would think--needs to point out that God loves to use:

*Small numbers.* Jonathan told his armor-bearer (I Samuel 14:6) that it makes little difference to God whether He saves by the few or the many.

Good reminder. You and I know small churches that feel they can't do anything because their members are few in number. Not so.

*Small people.* The Apostle Paul suggested in I Corinthians 1:26ff that the members of that church look around. They would see not many celebrities, not many people the world acclaims as great or mighty or rich or gifted. God chose to use the nobodies of the world.

*Small gifts.* No one illustrates this better than the boy who gave his lunch to Jesus and ended up feeding five thousand (John 6:9) or the widow who dropped her two coins into the offering and went on her way (Mark 12:42). Neither had any way of knowing what this meant to the Lord or that we would still be talking about them 2,000 years later.

*Small moments.* You prayed a prayer of commitment. You said "I do" at the altar. You decided to start reading your Bible. You went next door and invited your neighbor to church.