

**A Family of Misfits  
8/7/2016**

**I Cor. 1:9**

**<sup>9</sup> God, who has called you into fellowship  
with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.**

**That's where we ended last week,  
and that is where we NEED to start every Sunday,  
with the reminder that God is faithful.**

**We need to anchor into that reality  
as we begin to get into the tough stuff,  
the problems that Paul has to deal with in this letter.**

**1. Don't forget where we start.**

**2. Don't forget the baseline**

**that everything else is based on.**

**God will finish what HE started in us,**

**because HE is faithful.**

**And so Paul continues into his letter-**

**I Cor. 1:10**

**I appeal to you, brothers,  
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
that all of you agree with one another  
so that there may be no divisions among you  
and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.**

**Well, that's certainly a fine thought,**

**but what is Paul actually talking about here?**

**What is the problem he is trying to address?**

**<sup>11</sup> My brothers, some from Chloe's household  
have informed me that there are quarrels among you.**

Now in today's culture,  
 we would attack those from Chloe's household-  
 "You ratted us out to Paul."  
 How dare you leak this information."  
 But Paul is going to stay on-task.  
 There is a real problem here, a problem that we need to,  
 as Barney says, "Nip it in the bud... nip it."

<sup>12</sup> What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul";  
 another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas";  
 still another, "I follow Christ."  
 There was some "hero worship" going on,  
 instead of Christ worship.  
 And the group that claimed, "I follow Christ,"  
 they must have had a problem too, or why bring them up?

Now this is a little different from pulling for  
 the Redskins or the Steelers or the Cowboys,  
 in good-natured football rivalry.

This was about who was better than somebody else,  
 through what I call, "righteousness by association."

1. Who taught me, who studied with you?
2. Who baptized who?

<sup>13</sup> Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you?  
 Were you baptized into the name of Paul?

<sup>14</sup> I am thankful that I did not baptize any of you  
 except Crispus and Gaius,  
 so no one can say that you were baptized into my name.

<sup>16</sup> (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas;  
 beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.)

<sup>17</sup> For Christ did not send me to baptize,  
 but to preach the gospel—  
 not with words of human wisdom,  
 lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

It's not important who baptized you;  
 it's important who died for your sins...amen?

And to address this whole issue of "church hero worship,"  
 and "righteousness by association,"  
 he moves the conversation, appropriately,  
 to the cross of Jesus.

<sup>18</sup> 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.

The "message of the cross"-

what IS the message of the cross?

1. We used to talk about the real meaning of the peace sign, the crow's foot or inverted broken cross.
2. Today we talk about the meaning of  
 the political national conventions,
3. or about the "message" of the wave of shootings  
 in the news from around the world.

So what IS the message of the cross?

We say, "Did you get my message?"

So God says to us this morning,

"Did you get MY message?"

We say, "Which message was that?"

God says, "The message of the cross."

Whatever that message is,

(and we'll get back to that in a second,)

Paul says- it is foolishness to those who are perishing,  
 but it is the power of God to those who are being saved.

<sup>19</sup> For it is written: (quoting from Isaiah 29:14)

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;  
 the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate."

If you go back to Isaiah 29,  
 you will see that Isaiah is talking about  
 how God is not beholden to humanity  
 to conform his plans to theirs. Just the opposite.

God will do whatever furthers HIS redemptive agenda  
 for humanity, whether humanity approves of it or not.

<sup>20</sup> 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?

<sup>21</sup> 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.

<sup>22</sup> Jews demand miraculous signs  
 and Greeks look for wisdom,  
<sup>23</sup> but we preach Christ crucified:  
 a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,  
<sup>24</sup> but to those whom God has called,  
 both Jews and Greeks,  
 Christ- the power of God and the wisdom of God.

<sup>25</sup> For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom,  
 and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

Now, all of the sermon so far, was to set the stage for  
 where we really wanted to focus our attention this morning.  
 (Quick review)

1. God is faithful.
2. Be united in heart and mind.
3. Stop bickering about who is better than whom,  
 based on which church here you follow.

4. The message of the cross, whatever it is,  
is rather important,  
in that for those who are being saved,  
it is the power of almighty God himself.

5. What humanity thinks is wise, is actually pretty dumb,  
and through the “foolishness of what was preached,”  
God’s wisdom is revealed.

(So what does any of that have to do with  
our sermon theme for today, “a family of misfits?”)

<sup>26</sup> Brothers, think of what you were when you were called.

(Remember our conversation about verses 1-9  
and how many times Paul used the word “call.”  
Well here it is again.)

Not many of you were wise by human standards;  
not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.

1. Any of you in the tabloids?

2. Any of you have the paparazzi

hiding out in your bushes with cameras?

3. Any of you political juggernauts,

economic ubermen, or of “noble birth?”

Steve Nemes, apparently WAS of noble birth;

his grandfather knighted after WW 1.

(Anybody else?)

Nope, just ordinary folk, the salt of the earth, that’s us.

WE, then, are the people Paul is talking to.

If we are children of God this morning,

it’s not because of our charm, our wealth,

our intelligence, our noble birth.

<sup>27</sup> 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.

<sup>28</sup> He chose the lowly things of this world  
and the despised things—and the things that are not—  
to nullify the things that are,

Why?

1. So that everybody would feel like slime?
2. So that we would all wallow in low self-esteem?

(Heaven's, no!)

(But by the way, how DOES it feel to be called foolish,  
weak, lowly, despised... things that are not?  
But that IS what we were.)

Paul he chose folks like us-

<sup>29</sup> so that no one may boast before him.

<sup>30</sup> 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.

<sup>31</sup> Therefore, as it is written:

“Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

1. You want to boast about your SAT scores?  
Knock yourself out.
2. You want to boast about your earnings,  
your retirement pension, your new promotion?
3. How about your fitbit score, your tummy tuck...  
we'll stop there.

But any of you want to brag about

your own personal righteousness, your holiness,  
or saving yourself from eternal damnation?

Have fun with that.

It is because of Him... period.

<sup>31</sup> Therefore, as it is written:

“Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

Not quite done yet. I Corinthians 2:1  
 When I came to you, brothers (and sisters),  
 I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom  
 as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God.

<sup>2</sup> For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you  
 except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

<sup>3</sup> I came to you in weakness and fear,  
 and with much trembling.

<sup>4</sup> My message and my preaching (interesting distinction)  
 were not with wise and persuasive words,  
 but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power,

<sup>5</sup> so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom,  
 but on God's power.

I don't know what that

“demonstration of the Spirit's power” was,  
 but Paul contrasts it directly with man's wisdom,  
 -what makes sense, from a worldly point of view.

That's CRAZY- trusting in a crucified messiah.

That's CRAZY, that you should turn the other cheek,  
 instead of lashing back in anger.

That's just crazy, that you waste your own time,  
 doing things for other people who can't and won't,  
 ever pay you back.

Could it be that ALL of those things I just named  
 represent a demonstration of the Spirit's power?

We think of miracles, or healing, or raising the dead-  
 they attracted attention during Jesus' lifetime,  
 and they DID attract crowds,  
 but they didn't keep Jesus off the cross.

Today, we want the miracles, the flashy, showy stuff,  
 but maybe in our culture where camera tricks  
 make reality dull by comparison,  
 it is the unexpected act of kindness  
 that reveals the Spirit's power... in who?  
 In the lives of the "world's misfits,"  
 in the NOT rich, NOT influential, the NOT of noble birth.

1. Paying it forward.
2. Watching somebody's kid for them.
3. Caring for your parents or siblings,  
 when others wouldn't.

What catches your "compassion meter" on Facebook,  
 the videos with stupid stuff...(Yes, but not for compassion)  
 or the ones where someone  
 does the unexpected compassionate deed,

1. the haircutter for the homeless in London,
2. the little girl who made bags for the homeless,
3. The black teen who saw a white girl being kidnapped  
 and busted it up,
4. The police officer doing a dance-off  
 with an inner city kid, just because.

YOU be the miracle that draws somebody to Jesus-  
 YOUR life, your kindness, your humility,  
 your sense of humor, your story... your life.

Physical "miracles" happen in hospitals  
 all the time these days.

You be the miracle that heals  
 a heart or a soul, a broken spirit.

The family of misfits, from the Island of Misfit toys,  
 (Rudolph the reindeer) that's us in Warrenton.

In Luke 14,

Jesus calls those who have come to the banquet,  
the crippled the poor , the blind and the lame.

I'm fine with that, because the miracle isn't me, or us,  
it is what we allow God to do through us.

Even better,  
when it can be a wonderful, unexpected surprise.

Bill and Melinda Gates- they can afford to do it.

Warren Buffett- he can afford to do it.

Brad and Angelina- they can afford to do it,  
and good for all of them, when they do.

But who gets the credit when those I fondly call  
“the little people” do great things for God?

Again- the heart things, the broken-spirit things,  
the hands and heart-of-Christ things...



## kintsukuroi

(n.) (v. phr.) "to repair with gold"; the art of repairing pottery with gold or silver lacquer and understanding that the piece is more beautiful for having been broken

<sup>4</sup> **My message and my preaching  
 were not with wise and persuasive words,  
 but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power,**  
<sup>5</sup> **so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom,  
 but on God's power.**

**This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine (repeat 2x)  
 Let it shine all the time, let it shine... oh yeah.**

**For each one of us-  
 Lets let "this little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine,  
 let it shine, all the time, let it shine... oh yeah."**