

“Why God Chooses Us”



Do you ever become discouraged and disheartened when your spiritual life and witness suffer because of personal sin or failure? We tend to think we're worthless nobodies—and left to ourselves, that would be true! **But be encouraged—worthless nobodies are just the kind of people God uses.** If you think about it, that's all He has

to work with! But have you ever stopped to consider why that's true? The Apostles were slow to believe, slow to understand, and had horrendous memories! Sound familiar? Don't worry—that is perfectly consistent with the way the Lord always works. That is the very reason there were no philosophers, no brilliant writers, no famous debaters, no distinguished teachers, and no men who had ever distinguished themselves as great orators among the twelve Christ chose. They became great spiritual leaders and great preachers under the power of the Holy Spirit, but it was not because of any innate oratorical skill, leadership abilities, or academic qualifications they had. Their influence is owing to one thing and one thing only: **The Power Of The Message They Preached.** On a human level, the Gospel was considered a foolish message and the Apostles were deemed unsophisticated preachers. Their teaching was beneath the elite. They were mere fishermen and working-class nobodies. Peons. That was the assessment of their contemporaries and that has been the majority opinion of the genuine church of Christ throughout history and to this very day! Beloved, God will be your ability. He will be your sufficiency.

God's Champions

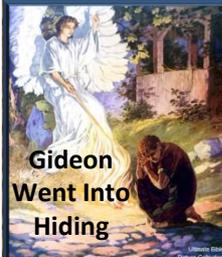


God populates His church with the rejects of the world and then sprinkles in a few wealthy and powerful people. He prefers losers. God deliberately chooses the forgotten of the world and He prefers the company of the poor. He loves to save the uneducated, the foolish, the addicted, the broken, the downcast, and the imprisoned. **In short, He specializes in saving those whom the world counts as nothing.** **Noah:** Rejected from society. Built an ark for 120 years and had no converts. **Joseph:** Ostracized by his dysfunctional family; possesses a prison record. **Moses:** A modest and meek man, but poor communicator, even stuttering at times. Murderer. **David:** Affair with his neighbor's wife; murdered her husband to avoid charges. **Elijah:** Prone to depression—Collapses under pressure. **Jeremiah:** Emotionally unstable, alarmist, negative, always lamenting things. **Peter:** Aggressive, hot-tempered fisherman, loose cannon who denied Christ.



God doesn't take the majority of His workers from the ranks of the wise, mighty or noble. First Corinthians 1:26 says, **“For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.”** Continuing in 1 Corinthians 1, verse 27, **“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.”** Paul says to get His job done, God uses things which are foolish, things which are weak, things which are base, things which are despised.

THE WEAK AND THE NOBODIES



Gideon Went Into Hiding

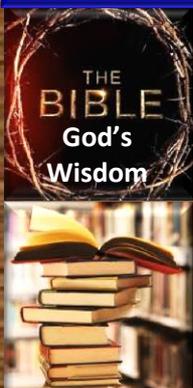


Gideon Delivers Israel

Weary, feeble, powerless... Sometimes when we feel physically or spiritually weak, we're tempted to take a **“time-out,”** thinking that God will use us again when we are stronger. In Judges 6, we're introduced to Gideon who was taking a **“time-out.”** It was wartime, and Gideon was hiding when an angel of the Lord appeared to tell him that he would be the one to save Israel. Imagine Gideon's astonishment: **“Then the LORD turned to him and said, “Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian; I hereby commission you.”** He responded, **“But sir, how can I deliver Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.”** The LORD said to him, **“But I will be with you, and you shall strike down the Midianites, every one of them.”** (Judges 6:14-16)

After God enlisted the nobody Gideon, He got a nobody army. Then God took those nobodies and won the battle! God takes us in our weak state and uses us so He alone can be glorified. **“So the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the jars, holding in their left hands the torches, and in their right hands the trumpets to blow; and they cried, “A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!”** Every man stood in his place all around the camp, and all the men in camp ran; they cried out and fled. When they blew the three hundred trumpets, the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow and against all the army; and the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath. **And the men of Israel were called out from Naphtali and from Asher and from all Manasseh, and they pursued after the Midianites.”** (Judges 7:20-23) God's wisdom is a kind of paradox. In human thinking, strength is strength, weakness is weakness, and intelligence is intelligence. But in God's economy some of the seemingly strongest things are the weakest, some of the seemingly weakest things are the strongest, and some of the seemingly wisest things are the most foolish. The paradox is not by accident but by God's design.

Clear Difference Between Worldly "Wisdom" And True Wisdom



"The Fear Of The LORD Is The Beginning Of Wisdom, And Knowledge Of The Holy One Is Understanding." (Proverbs 9:10) The bible also teaches that there are different types of wisdom. There is worldly wisdom, and there is true or Godly wisdom. There are numerous scriptures on the difference between these two types of wisdom, and how God sees worldly wisdom... It is foolishness in God's eyes. (1 Cor. 3:18-19) The combination of pride and worldly wisdom is a recipe for disaster. A simple, uneducated, untalented, and clumsy believer who has trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior and who faithfully and humbly follows His Lord is immeasurably wiser

than the brilliant Ph.D. who scoffs at the gospel. The simple believer knows forgiveness, love, grace, life, hope, God's Word—God Himself He can see eternity. The unbelieving Ph.D., on the other hand, knows nothing beyond his books, his own mind, and his own experience. He sees nothing beyond this life, and he cannot be considered anything but foolish. We are often tempted to think that it would be wonderful if such-and-such a great athlete—or brilliant scientist, popular entertainer, or world leader—would become a Christian. But Jesus did not think this way when He chose His disciples. Some were probably well known in their local circles and perhaps a few of them were well off financially. But He did not choose them for their wealth or influence, and in His training of them He did not try to capitalize on any such things. None of them had anything so great that he was not ready to leave it to follow Christ.

"God Created Our Minds And Expects Us To Use Them"

When skeptics proudly state that they are too smart to believe in God, or talk about how all the "intelligent" people are atheists, it is a bit amusing. They don't understand that intelligence is not that relevant, when it comes to belief in God, since spiritual matters are perceived in an entirely different way, through our spirit. This is not to say that one can't use reason and logic, when it comes to arguments for God's existence. On the contrary, God created our minds and expects us to use them. But there's a difference between using logical, reasoned arguments in support of God's existence (apologetics) which pave the way for people to be open to the Gospel.... And actually knowing and experiencing God. The latter is what happens on a deeper level, through our spirit, revealed by the Holy Spirit. It may be possible to believe God exists, solely on an intellectual level. But actually putting one's faith in God, and seeing the value of the Gospel requires something more, it requires revelation from God, that we receive on a deeper level.

GETTING BACK TO THE ORIGINAL VERSE...

So why did God choose the foolish and the weak, when He could've done things a different way? A nonbeliever would say those things are hard to believe because they're just not true.... **"Who could believe such foolishness?"** **"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."** (1 Corinthians 1:18) What they probably haven't thought about is that God purposely chose to do things that way, to confound the so-called wise. I believe that God did things that way so that faith, humility and a simple, pure heart are necessary factors, when it comes to finding God and truth. (Matthew 5:8) **"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."** In contrast, the things the world looks to: worldly wisdom, power, strength and a "sophisticated" (jaded) mindset will not help one find God. In fact, those things can hinder a person from finding God, and pride in those things will blind a person to truth. I believe that maybe God also wanted to level the playing field, so that anyone can be used by God. One doesn't need a PhD, worldly power, wealth, or a perfect past to be used by God. **God can and DOES use people who are broken, imperfect and "weak", as long as they have a willing heart.** Just read the bible. It is filled with examples of imperfect, faulty people being used by God, in big ways. The thing that they all had in common was faith and a willingness to serve. **All of this goes along with Jesus' teaching: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."** (Matthew 18:3) **I think it's a good idea to think about this paradox... That only when we are weak can we become truly strong. "Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong."** (2 Corinthians 2:10) **"Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong." And only when we become "foolish" can we become truly wise.** (1 Corinthians 3:18-19) **"Do not deceive yourselves. If you think that you are wise in this age, you should become fools so that you may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness..."**

12 Ordinary Men



So what qualified those men to be apostles? The truth is, it wasn't any intrinsic ability or outstanding talent of their own. They were Galileans. They were not the elite. Galileans were considered low-class, rural, uneducated, people. They were commoners, nobodies. But those nobodies would become the preeminent leaders

of the fledgling church—its very foundation!