

Come Follow me
Elo Viz production
Week 35
1 Corinthians 1-7

The people of Corinth were having a hard time staying on the straight and narrow. Paul calls them “carnal” or worldly. It’s easy to tell that he is not too happy with them and the choices they are making in his absence. It is hard to watch someone you love make decisions that will stay with them for a long time.

Today, I would like to focus on how to avoid those things. How we can put our feet on the path to God and stay there. We tend to think that keeping all these laws and commandments will get us to the presents of God. Or, at least a pass when it comes to judgment day. My worry is that most of us would be shocked that we were sinning and we didn’t even realize it.

Paul says it this way:

“26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the **flesh**, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*:

27 But God hath chosen the **foolish** things of the world to **confound** the wise; and God hath chosen the **weak** things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and **sanctification**, and redemption:

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him **glory** in the Lord.”

(1 Corinthians 1:26-31)

I realize that because of the language this passage may be a little hard to understand so let's take a closer look and try to understand the profound message in these verses.

In ancient Roman times there were three classes of prestige that would give you an upper hand in society. Those that were learned, known as a “Wiseman”, those that were strong or mighty, and those that were of noble birth. If you were to walk into a strange city during a festival or a large event it would be fairly easy to spot these elite. They would usually be sitting high above the crowds looking down on those that were not so lucky. And if you needed something done, well, these men were known for their talents and influence so that is who you would go to, to make things happen.

What Paul is saying here is that there are some on this earth that would be an obvious choice for God to pick out of a crowd to make His work move forward at an exponential rate. For example; If God could just gather all the wise and smart people of the world and make them

missionaries to carry the gospel forth to the whole earth, well then, no one would be able to argue with them because these are literally the smartest people around. We hear that and it's funny because we in our carnal thinking we lean towards consent with this idea. When in reality, God doesn't need those people. Who is it that He has chosen to preach the most important message in all the universe? 18 year old young men and 19 year old young women. And, why would He do that? Because "He hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise". We all know this principle. In every story we read in the scriptures God is choosing leaders with a speech impediment (Moses), or a shepherd boy to defeat a giant (David), or a widowed outcast young woman to save a whole nation. (Ruth)

And here is the point: We seek for higher education, or power, or riches and say it is because we want to be better tools to serve God. When in reality; God doesn't need any of those things. All He needs from you is a willing heart. Now, please don't misunderstand. To seek after those things can be good for ourselves and for our family if it is for the correct purpose. But, let's not try to pull the wool over our own eyes and say it's for God, in an attempt to prove our noble cause. And, we need to be very careful because the obtainment of these carnal things lies on the edge of a steep cliff and may catch us in a trap and send us plummeting to the very demise we were trying to avoid.

Elder Holland said this several years ago:

"The moment you have a self there is the temptation to put it forward, to put it first and at the center of things. And the more we are—socially or intellectually or politically or economically—the greater the risk of increasing self-worship."

<https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/jeffrey-r-holland/will-father/>

It is indeed pride that is our greatest challenge as a modern day people.

In October of 2010 President Uchtdorf gave one of the best talks I have ever heard. In it he address this very issue we are discussing and he says:

"At its core, pride is a sin of comparison, for though it usually begins with "Look how wonderful I am and what great things I have done," it always seems to end with "Therefore, I am better than you."

When our hearts are filled with pride, we commit a grave sin, for we violate the two great commandments.⁷ Instead of worshipping God and loving our neighbor, we reveal the real object of our worship and love—the image we see in the mirror.

Pride is the great sin of self-elevation. It is for so many a personal Rameumptom, a holy stand that justifies envy, greed, and vanity.⁸ In a sense, pride is the original sin, for before the foundations of this earth, pride felled Lucifer, a son of the morning “who was in authority in the presence of God.”⁹ If pride can corrupt one as capable and promising as this, should we not examine our own souls as well?”

https://site.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2010/10/pride-and-the-priesthood?lang=eng&adobe_mc_ref=https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2010/10/pride-and-the-priesthood?lang=eng&adobe_mc_sdid=SDID=2124814E1FEAB2F7-77FFF708DA308DC0|MCORGID=66C5485451E56AAE0A490D45%40AdobeOrg|TS=1691328855

The scriptures show us clearly that if we are to be an instrument in the hands of the Lord our first and greatest task is to be humble and to seek the welfare of others. It really is the only way. With those that hold the priesthood of the Lord and administer to the sick and afflicted, do you really think that God will allow you to perform miracles in His name if all the accolades will be consumed upon your lust? The answer to this question is an obvious, no.

When Jacob the brother of Nephi was preaching to his people he revealed an incredible secret in his writings. He was telling us how tedious it was to chisel all the writings on the plates in order to preserve them for us in our day. How it took them so long and he hopes that his children and us would receive them with thankful hearts, and read them so that we may have joy. Then he says this:

“4 For, for this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we **knew** of Christ, and we had a hope of his **glory** many hundred years before his coming; and not only we ourselves had a hope of his glory, but also all the holy **prophets** which were before us.

5 Behold, they believed in Christ and **worshiped** the Father in his name, and also we worship the Father in his **name**.

6 Wherefore, we search the prophets, and we have many revelations and the spirit of **prophecy**; and having all these **witnesses** we obtain a hope, and our faith becometh unshaken, insomuch that we truly can **command** in the **name** of Jesus and the very trees obey us, or the mountains, or the waves of the sea.

7 Nevertheless, the Lord God showeth us our **weakness** that we may know that it is by his **grace**, and his great condescensions unto the children of men, that we have power to do these things.

8 Behold, great and marvelous are the **works** of the Lord. How **unsearchable** are the depths of the **mysteries** of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his

ways. And no man **knoweth** of his **ways** save it be revealed unto him; wherefore, brethren, despise not the **revelations** of God.

9 For behold, by the power of his **word** **man** came upon the face of the earth, which earth was **created** by the power of his word. Wherefore, if God being able to speak and the world was, and to speak and man was created, O then, why not able to command the **earth**, or the workmanship of his hands upon the face of it, according to his will and pleasure?

10 Wherefore, brethren, seek not to **counsel** the Lord, but to take counsel from his hand. For behold, ye yourselves know that he counseleth in **wisdom**, and in justice, and in great mercy, over all his works.”

(Jacob 4:4-10)

I love that passage. And what is incredible to me is that; this is before Christ was even born. These people didn't have a record that showed them all that Jesus did here on the earth in His mortal flesh. They didn't have an eyewitness account of the Savior in the garden of Gethsemane taking upon Him the sins of the whole world. All they had was a hope in the visions and revelation given from prophets of old that these things would happen. How much greater faith did that take then for us that know and believe the history as it was recorded. And yet are we able to command the trees and they obey as Jacob did, or the mountains or the waves of the sea? What does that tell us about the state of our humility? See, God shows us our weaknesses and we assume that that means we have some flaws and that God doesn't like us because of our natural man. When in reality they are meant to humble us.

If we want to be used by God to accomplish His work then we need to be the weak things of this world. And, I don't mean weak as in, stop going to the gym or eating healthy. He means that you view yourself as weak (which we are compared to Him) and this in turn will make us humble and submissive to His will. The issue we have is that if we think we are smart or wise, then we don't listen to God because we believe we know more than Him. If we believe we are strong then we believe we don't need God to move that mountain because we can do it ourselves.

But, here is the rub. Without God you would cease to exist. Remember what Lehi told Laman just before he died:

“**13** And if ye shall say there is **no law**, ye shall also say there is no sin. If ye shall say there is no sin, ye shall also say there is no righteousness. And if there be no righteousness there be no happiness. And if there be no righteousness nor happiness there be no punishment nor misery. And if these things are not **there** is no God. And if there is no God we are not, neither the earth; for there could have been no creation of things, neither to act nor to be acted upon; wherefore, all things must have vanished away. (2 Nephi: 2:13)

He is our very breath that sustains us. Without God we can do nothing. We would be nothing. I'd like to leave you with one of my favorite scriptures to ponder. Remember how powerful Ammon was as a missionary converting whole cities cutting off arms with one wave of a sword? The reason Ammon was so powerful was because of his view of himself and of God. In speaking of his journeys among the Lamanites he said:

“I do not **boast** in my own strength, nor in my own wisdom; but behold, my **joy** is full, yea, my heart is brim with **joy**, and I will rejoice in my God.

12 Yea, I know that I am **nothing**; as to my strength I am weak; therefore I will **not** boast of myself, but I will **boast** of my God, for in his **strength** I can do all **things**; yea, behold, many mighty miracles we have wrought in this land, for which we will praise his name forever.”

(Alma 26: 11-12)

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.