1 Corinthians 1:31 Therefore, as it is written; “Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.”

What would you say is the biggest danger to the Christian Church? Or if you would, you could ask, what is the biggest danger to souls of the world today?

Now there are plenty out there who would say, “The biggest danger to the church is false preaching and teaching!” To which I would reply, “Yes, that is dangerous, but is it the most dangerous?” Here’s why I would say that. It is true that there are many churches today who have succumbed to the fancies of false teaching, totally unaware that such is the case among themselves. But false teaching is really fairly easy to spot. If what is taught does not agree with God’s Word it is a danger and could jeopardize your soul. Now, where the church or religious organization is clearly teaching falsehoods that declare it non-Christian, that shouldn’t be a problem to see. If the church denies the actual physical resurrection of Jesus from the dead, that church is no longer a Christian church. If the church teaches that it is okay to deny or ignore various parts of the Bible, after all that’s a 2,000 year old book and why would we want to believe or follow that, that is not a Christian church! So there are teachings that if denied or watered down can eliminate you from the Christian faith. No doubt, false teaching is dangerous and souls can be destroyed.

But here is why it is not the most dangerous. Do you know what Isaiah 55:10-11 says? It says, **“As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth; It will not return to me empty but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”** That is God speaking of the power of his Word. It always accomplishes what He desires. In churches where there is false teaching, whether some or a lot, as long as God’s Word, the Bible is used there that Word of God will do exactly what God wants it to do. If that Word is to save, so it will be! If that Word is to be **“the smell of death”** (2 Co 2:15) so it will be! Even in a false Christian church God can and does use His Word to bring souls to where he wants them. He can do that because He is God. Poor preaching, good preaching, praise bands, bad or good liturgy and anything else you would like to point to as the reason for the church struggling is pure garbage or any of those things promoted as the way to grow a church is also pure garbage. God’s Word and what God wants to accomplish is the only thing that counts! False teaching is a danger but it is not the greatest danger.

I believe the greatest danger to our souls is us! That somehow we begin to think that WE are the difference in anything to do with our salvation or with the church growing or not growing. That somehow we are something, that God needs us because our piety and goodness are such lights to this world of ours, that we will be the movers and shakers and the kingdom of Jesus will fall or stand on our legs! In other words our biggest problem is our own aggrandizement, our own self-exalting hypocrisy that leaves Jesus and his wonder behind. It is the reason people stay in false churches, they think they are above being led astray and eventually they think that parts of God’s Word are just not important! It is the reason that true churches become false, because finally we humans think we know better than God and can save better than God, we think our way superior to and the judge of the Word. It is the reason we become modern day Judases, we think our plan and idea for Jesus is so much better than what Jesus laid forth and so we sell off Jesus in our lives for wealth, fame, sex, power, or bigger numbers. The greatest danger to our souls is us!

Let’s turn our attention to the words before us today and contemplate its message all the more for ourselves. Our theme will be: **BOAST IN THE LORD. 1st. Why are you here? 2nd. God chose the weak things. 3rd. The Lord, the Lord, the Lord!**

Our first part asks, “Why are you here? Why are you saved, a called child of God and an heir of eternal life and salvation? If your answer in any way includes who and what you are then I will tell you point blank, you have a faith problem! Because there is only one answer to why you are included in the Kingdom of God and the eternity of Christ….God chose you! God of his grace and mercy, his boundless love and compassion for you, chose to call you to eternal life in Christ Jesus our Savior. That’s what Paul is driving at when he says, **“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.”** In other words, there was nothing in you that caused this to happen.

I know, Paul seems to be a bit harsh here. He tells his people, you were not **“by human standards, very wise!”** Yet Paul was not really attacking their intelligence or common sense abilities. By the standards of the world, every Christian is a fool, a real low-life that doesn’t have a clue about what life is truly about. When he tells them they are not influential he is saying they have no power to sway or convince anyone of anything. Isn’t he right? How can you influence the dead? Isn’t that what God tells us is the natural state of the world! Dead in sin and trespass! Who can talk the dead into life? Nope, we have nothing going for us there. Or the fact that we are not of noble birth. Everybody thinks that is something, this noble birth. But what is that, noble birth? Someone, somewhere, through conquest, declares himself the king and after that he is “noble?” Seriously, what is that? Compared to the majesty and total royalty of God what is this “nobility” that man declares?

So as you look at what Paul is saying to these people it is clear he is simply trying to get across to them that before God, they had nothing! Yet here they were, here you are, children of God and heirs of eternal life! How? How could this be? Our text gives the simple answer: “**God called, God chose.”**

But don’t stop there. Look at what the text says, **“God chose the weak things, the lowly things, the despised things, the things that are not!”** Here is the majesty and wonder of God at work! This seems to be God’s pattern for our world. The people he chose to be the forefathers of his Son were rascals and sinners of the greatest bent. The whole first generation of Exodus people were so faithless that God had them all die out in the desert rather than allow them the Promised Land. Weak and lowly. Or think of Jesus. The Son of God does not come into the world rich, surrounded by servants and soldiers, lodged in a castle or any such things. He comes lowly and humble, born to a poor mother and step-father who had a lowly and simple job. And during his adult life Jesus clearly states, **“The Son of man has no place to lay his head.”** But that is how God works.

As Jesus is doing ministry, he doesn’t pick school professors and company CEO’s to be his apostles. He picks fishermen, tax collectors and an assortment of “why that guy” to be his spokesmen and mentors. And as if Jesus choices in followers isn’t bad enough, Jesus gets arrested, tried as a capital criminal, and crucified on the cross among criminals! He doesn’t even have his own burial plot. Yep, those are the weak things, the lowly things, the despised things…oh yeah, what about “the things that are not?

Think of it. All the things found in this faith of ours that the world says are pure and total nonsense because we can’t see, hear, or grasp it. The Trinity of God, the purity and holiness of the Bible, the body and blood of Jesus in communion, the gift of the Holy Spirit in baptism and in the means of grace! Some of it doesn’t seem to make sense and some of it just seems beyond belief! But isn’t that the point of faith? That we believe and trust in God first and foremost! That is faith!

Just look at and contemplate what those last two verses say to us. **“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. Therefore, as it is written; ‘Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.’”**

Because of God the Father we have the gift of eternal life and salvation. He is the one who promised and fulfilled the promises of Jesus the Savior from Sin. He is the one who has moved and acted in all of history to make sure the wonder and marvel of a Savior from sin, by grace through faith has come into being. He is the power and majesty, the hope and peace, the Rock and foundation of all that we are as children of God. He is the one who has called you, the one who used the weak, the lowly, the despised things and the things that aren’t for our eternal life and salvation. God the Father is our life!

There is more. Because of God the Father we are in Christ Jesus! Jesus is in us and we are in Him. Now, when God the Father looks at us, He sees Jesus, the Jesus in us rather than us. But notice that Jesus is also called **“wisdom from God.”** You cannot know the Father without knowing the Son. You cannot fathom the depth of God’s love without seeing the love of Jesus as He endures the punishments of eternal hell for us! You cannot be and will not be alive without the wonder of Jesus!

There is more. This “Wisdom from God” is called “our righteousness, holiness and redemption.” It is what Jesus has come to do. These three words combined are the sum of what Jesus is all about. His perfect and holy life, his perfect and complete sacrifice which we are clothed with, that is why we are righteousness. We are declared by God free from sin and alive to His marvel. It is this righteousness that is the cause of our holiness. Not a single sin is held against us. Not because we are sinless in ourselves, but because Jesus was sinless and holy for us. And then it is that holiness that leads to our redemption. We are saved because of and in Jesus. We are granted the gift of eternal life and salvation, free, sure, and completely just because of the righteousness and holiness of Jesus cast upon us by a gracious and loving Father!

And most simply, all of this is ours “by grace through faith.” We have heard the wonder of Jesus, we have been exposed in some way to the Gospel message that Jesus is our Redeemer from sin, our Life from the death of sin, our Way into God’s truth and marvel. But please note that even our faith, that gift of God given by the Holy Spirit who causes true life in us and then leads us in Jesus through life, even that Holy Spirit is God’s acting and God’s power to save!

It is true. It is not about us! We are not the indispensable and necessary cause of faith. It is God. It is Jesus. It is the Holy Spirit. Never forget the simple and wonderful truth, **“Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord!”** Thank you God for our life. Thank you for Jesus who is our life. Thank you, Father and Son, for the Holy Spirit who has called and chosen us in life. Amen!