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GOD'S UNEXPECTED WAYS

God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise.

1 Corinthians 1:27

READ 1 Corinthians 1:21-31

The pastor squinted over his sermon, holding the pages close to his face so he could see the words. He was extremely nearsighted and read each carefully chosen phrase with an unimposing monotone voice. But God's Spirit moved through Jonathan Edwards' preaching to fan the revival fires of the First Great Awakening and bring thousands to faith in Christ.

God often uses unexpected things to accomplish His perfect purposes. Writing about His plan to draw wayward humanity near through Jesus' loving death for us on a cross, Paul concludes, "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" (1 Corinthians 1:27). The world expected divine wisdom to look like our own and to come with irresistible force. Instead, Jesus came humbly and gently to save us from our sins and so became for us "wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption" (v. 30).

The eternal and all-wise God became a human baby who would grow to adulthood and suffer and die and be raised to life in order to lovingly show us the way home to Him. He loves to use humble means and people to accomplish great things we could never achieve in our own strength. If we're willing, He may even use us.

By James Banks

PRAY & REFLECT

Loving Father, thank You for Your unexpected ways. Help me to follow You closely today, so that I may be used for what's pleasing to You. Amen

What unexpected things have you seen God do? How will you make yourself available to Him today?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

The church at Corinth was a troubled assembly wracked by personality cults (1 Corinthians 1, 3), lack of wisdom (ch. 2), spiritual pride (ch. 4), immorality (ch. 5), lawsuits between believers (ch. 6), troubled marriages (ch. 7), meat offered to idols (ch. 8), the need for self-discipline (ch. 9), and abuse of both the Lord's Supper (ch. 11) and spiritual gifts (chs. 12-14). The seriousness of the problems is underlined by the fact that Paul steps away from his "typical" pattern in letters to churches. Normally, the first half of a letter is teaching, and the second half is practical application. As one teacher said, the first half tells us what to believe and the second half teaches us how to behave. In 1 Corinthians, Paul spends fourteen chapters troubleshooting before he gets to one chapter on the doctrine of the resurrection (ch. 15) and some closing practical thoughts (ch. 16). – By **Bill Crowder**

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