

Chosen

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One of the drills I hated the most in school was the choosing of teams for various sports. Two or more students would be appointed captains. One by one they would choose players for their respective teams.

Being one of the shortest kids in school, and lacking a lot of athletic prowess, I was usually one of the last to be chosen.

How awkward it was hearing name after name called, while I remained unchosen. How frustrating and embarrassing to watch others celebrate their selection, while I stood among the growing minority of those nobody really wanted on their team. Of course, eventually I would be chosen, not for any skill on my part, but only because it was required that someone choose me.

I am sure there are others reading this who shared my experience. Perhaps like me, they will appreciate these inspired words from the pen of Paul:

For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong (1 Corinthians 1:26-27).

Paul politely reminds the Corinthians that, although they were blessed to be in Christ, in terms of their ranking in the world, they were not the brightest or strongest. However, despite what they lacked by the world's standard, God still chose them.

This is often how it is with God. Throughout the Bible, we find God choosing those whom the world would not choose.

In the days of the judges, God chose Gideon. Shocked at being chosen, Gideon replied, "O Lord, how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father's house" (cf. Judges 6:15). In other words, "Lord, are You sure about choosing me?"

When Israel was challenged by the Philistine giant named Goliath, Saul's army cowered in fear. Deliverance for them would not come from any of Israel's physically strong and trained soldiers. Rather, God chose a small and comparatively weak shepherd boy named David. However, what David lacked in physical strength, he gained in the strength of his faith.

When Jesus chose the twelve, He did not go looking among the priests and scribes of the Jewish people. Rather, He went to the shoreline of Galilee and chose some fishermen. Later He chose a tax collector, even though the Jewish people despised the tax collectors. All in all, this was a group of men whom no one else would have chosen for the task of preaching God's word to the world. They were not the brightest or the most righteous. Still, they were God's choice.

There are many other examples such as these found in the Bible. The wisdom of God's choice in all of these examples is seen by the success of each. They are each wonderful reminders for all of us. As Christians, we have been chosen by God. Paul put it this way:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the

foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him (Ephesians 1:3-4).

We are sometimes afraid of the word “chosen” because of the way it is applied in Calvinism. Paul’s point is not anything that would support the error of Calvinistic doctrine. He is simply pointing out that God had a plan to save us before the foundation of the world. God chose to save us is the idea. Through our obedience to the Gospel, we are considered called of God (2 Thess. 2:14). We are chosen (1 Peter 2:9). Though the world has perhaps passed you up many times, because you were not the smartest or strongest, how does it feel to be chosen of God?

To come to Christ, one does not have to be (by the world’s standards), the strongest or smartest. They do not have to be “super good” or “super religious.” They simply need to be willing to humble themselves in obedience to the Gospel. Let us remember this as we choose those with whom we will share the Gospel, and those whom we may have not considered choosing.