

Sermons at Union Congregational Church

Preached by Mr. Larry Robinson, Guest Preacher

July 17, 2016

Ninth Sunday After Pentecost

1 Corinthians 1:26-29

God Can Use You Too

For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. 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, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.

Wise-having experience, knowledge, or good judgement Mighty-possessing great power or strength; stature Noble-high social or political status Foolish-lacking good sense or judgement Shame-loss of respect.

In this passage Paul is explaining to the church of Corinth the reason for the call. As Christians, we need to know why we are called. He states in an expanded translation: For you see your calling, brethren, that not many that have experience, knowledge, or good judgement according to the flesh (human reasoning skills; education or background). God does not need our human ability in order for His will being accomplished on earth to be successful) Not many mighty-possessing great power or strength; stature Wealthy. God does not human financial support to accomplish His will. Not many Noble-high social or political status (your personal status in the community; whether or not you are among the right crowd or are associated with the movers and shakers in the community) God is not looking for that. Example David: last brother called forward and he was the one that was anointed King. But God has chosen the foolish things (lacking good sense or political status) of the world to put to shame (cause to lose respect) the wise (having experience, knowledge).

God loves to use people who do not rely on their own skills and abilities and show off His power, wisdom, and love. He did this in the work of Jesus Christ. Philippians 2:5 : Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Its through humility that God is able to demonstrate His power, which is what he wants. But even in the midst of your world view, God can still show that He is in charge.

I grew up as a child of five. With an older sister and brother and a younger sister and brother. Me, being the middle child. My dad was an "unprofessed" alcoholic. He would drink a fifth of Jim Beam and a six pack and smoke every night. My parents used to argue all the time we were a dysfunctional home (my father used to always say that we are not a family, but just people living under the same roof). My sister at the age of 16 got pregnant and my mom was so angry that she kicked her out of the house. There is something to be said about generational curse: my grandmother got pregnant out of wedlock with my mom, my mom got pregnant out of wedlock with my sister, and my sister followed suit. My father was a high school dropout. My older brother was a high school dropout as well as my younger brother. I stayed in school. I struggled throughout middle school and high school years. When I graduated high school, my GPA was less than a 2.0. Not good and no chance to go to college without taking some remedial college courses. In my senior year, my parents got divorced. I wanted to do something with my life and I need a way out. I decided to go into the AF so that I could have some stability in my life and then work toward going to college. This is still one of the best decisions I ever made. When I was in my very early 20s I met someone in the AF and got married. My mom was violently opposed and I only

knew her for six months. But being young and naive, I did it anyway. The marriage did not last and I ended up getting divorced.

But God had a plan for me even when I could not see it. I started going to school a few years after getting into the AF to get my degree. It took me 10 years to get my bachelor's degree (going on and off due to military deployments) but I graduated with a Bachelors of Science degree as Magna Cum Laude and a 3.97 GPA. With 2 years of my graduation, I completed two Masters' degrees both as Magna Cum Laude. I am the first and the only one in my family who graduated from college with a bachelors degree. I remarried and met my current wife who I believe is the person that God had for me in mind all the time. I am engineer for one of the most prestigious engineering institutions on the plant, MIT. I never even imaged it possible, God had everything to do with this. People can look at you accomplishments and always think that you had it easy or that you preplanned it. Most people don't know the story behind the story. Everyone has a story and God wants to use what happened in your past, what is happening to you right now, to show how loving and kind He is and that He does have your best interest at heart. Life has many challenges and we don't always understand or know, but know this, God can use you and He wants to.

I would like to end this with a poem. I heard this poem many years ago and it really resonated with me and I have often referred to it because it really is the core of what I believe:

A Winner's Creed If you think you are beaten, you are; If you think you dare not, you don't; If you'd like to win, but think you can't It's almost cinch, you won't. If you think you'll lose, you've lost; Since out in the world you'll find success begins with a person's faith, It's all in the state of mind. Life's battles don't always go to the stronger or faster hand; But goes to the one who trusts in God and always thinks...."I CAN".

You can and God can use you. We can do all things through Christ who strengths us.