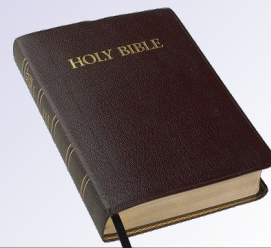
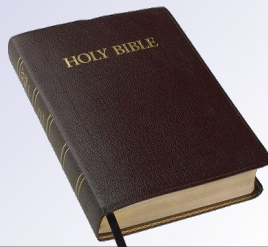


***Your Life in Christ Should
Not Be a Soap Opera
Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians***



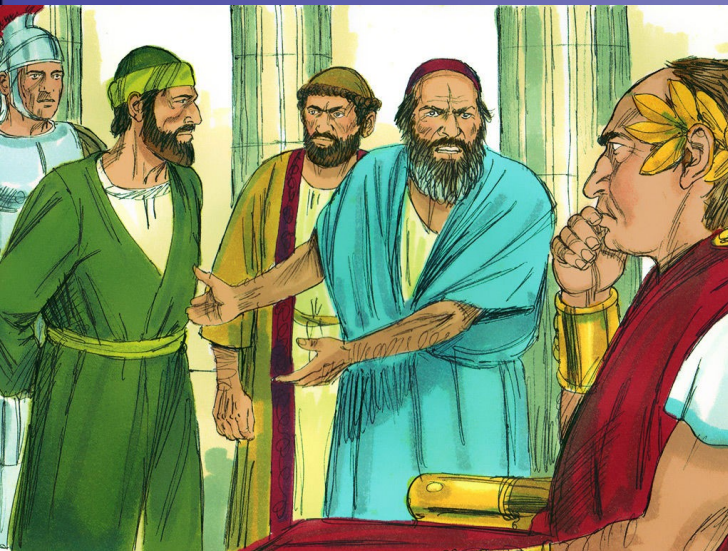
1 Corinthians

- *A Little Bit of Background*
- *Dear Corinth... (continued)*



Dear Corinth...

- Where did we leave off last week?
 - Let's get back into the text, with a little review...
 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:1 (i.e.; "From _____")
 - Who is this letter from?
 - Why would Sosthenes—who had angrily dragged Paul before Gallius on charges back in Acts 18—now be traveling with Paul and joining him in ministry in Ephesus?
 - But there were lots of people traveling and ministering with Paul in Ephesus—so why did Paul highlight *Sosthenes* to the Corinthian church?



Dear Corinth...

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 - Let's get back into the text, with a little review...
 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:1
 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:2-3 (i.e.; “To _____”)
 - As we started to discuss last week, Paul is pounding down a point here, linguistically
 - “To the church of God in Corinth...”
(“ἐκκλησία” or “ekklēsia,” meaning “called-out ones”—from the Greek root, “καλέω” or “kaleō,” meaning “to call,” plus the prefix “ἐκ” or “ek,” meaning “out of”)



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 - As we started to discuss last week, Paul is pounding down a point here, linguistically
 - "To the *called-out* of God in Corinth..."
 - So what would using that word remind the believers in Corinth?



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 - “To the *called-out* of God in Corinth...”
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 - “To the *called-out* of God in Corinth...”
 - “to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and *called* to be holy...”
 - Why would Paul repeatedly say to the Corinthians, “You've been set apart in Christ and *called* to be set apart”?



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 - “to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and *called* to be holy...”
 - “together with all those everywhere who *call* on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours”
 - Why remind the Corinthians that they are part of a *worldwide* group of believers who *all* call on the *same* Lord?
 - How should we focus on that same point?



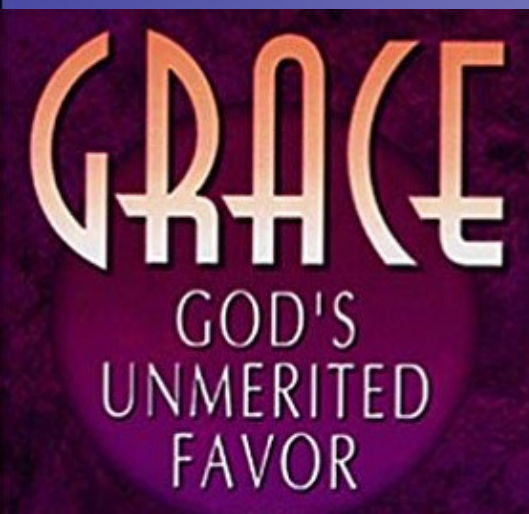
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 - “To the **called-out** of God in Corinth...”
 - “to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and **called** to be holy...”
 - “together with all those everywhere who **call** on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours”
 - So what *is* Paul getting at with all of this clever little repetition?
 - Christians have been called to be separate—to be set apart from the world—and yet we all call back to God together, in unity
 - Is that what we do?



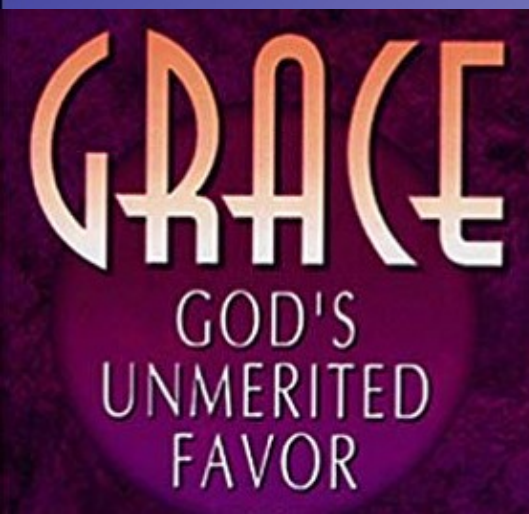
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 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:1
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 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:4-6
 - In verse 4, why does Paul extend God's "unmerited favor"
(because "χάρις" or "cháris"—translated here as "grace"—is literally referring to a free and unmerited kindness shown to someone else)



Dear Corinth...

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 - In verse 4, why does Paul extend God's "unmerited favor" to them, and then *repeat* that he *thanks* God for the "unmerited favor" that He's shown them?
 - Again, what does this suggest about what's been going on in Corinth?



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 - In verse 4, why does Paul extend God's "unmerited favor" to them, and then *repeat* that he *thanks* God for the "unmerited favor" that He's shown them?
 - In verse 5, why does Paul emphasize that they've been "enriched" by God—in both all of their communication and all of their knowledge?
(*HINT: Remember what we know about Corinth*)
 - So what sorts of "enrichment" should *healthy* believers be looking for—and what should we *not* be looking for?
 - So what sorts of enrichment are we looking for today, in our faith and in our relationships?



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 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:1
 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:2-3
 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:4-6
 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:7-8
 - In verse 7, why might Paul emphasize that the church in Corinth *isn't* lacking “any spiritual gift” here?
(NOTE: The word here technically just means “gift”—but Paul uses it exclusively in this letter to refer to “*spiritual gifts*” from God, so the NIV has solid justification for translating it this way—BTW, the word is “*χάρισμα*” or “*chárisma*,” which comes from the same root as “*χάρις*” or “*cháris*”)
(So what might it do to, say, the Corinthians' understanding of “spiritual gifts” to be reminded—even in the word itself—that they are unmerited?)



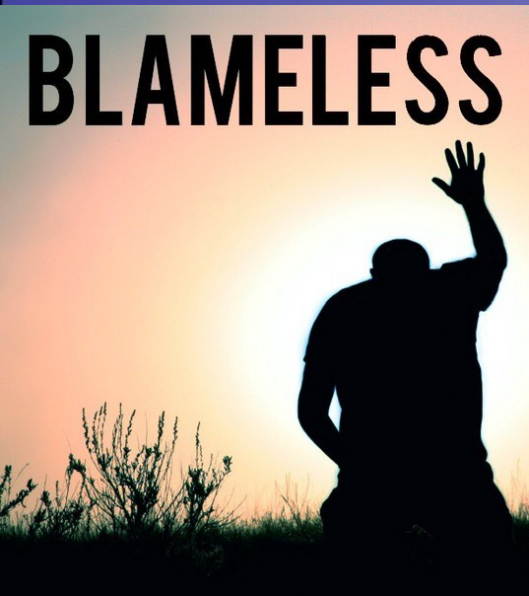
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 - In verse 7, why might Paul emphasize that the church in Corinth *isn't* lacking "any spiritual gift" here?
 - From later on in the letter (*SPOILERS!*), we know that they're having a few problems in this area
 - Does anyone remember *what kinds* of problems?
 - Why would people in a city like Corinth be so focused on being sure that *they* always get the *best* gifts?
 - Why do we today?
 - How does Paul's opening already begin to address our specific issues in the area of spiritual gifts?



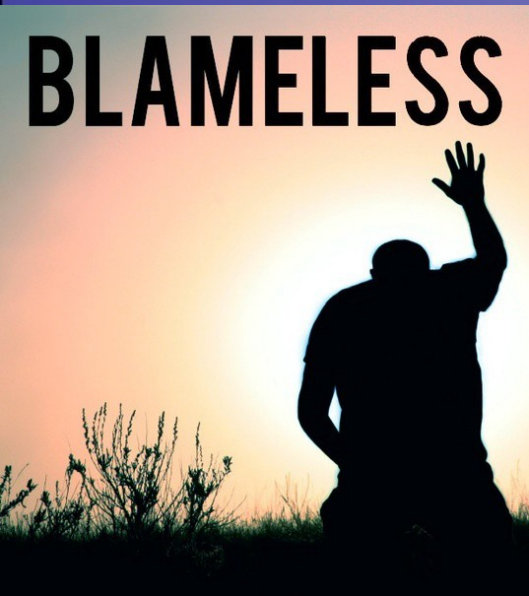
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 - In verse 8, why does Paul emphasize the Corinthians' blamelessness?
 - That's actually another really interesting word...
(in the Greek, it's “ἀνέγκλητος” or “*anegklētos*” —meaning, “*not ἐγκλητος*” or “*not egklētos*”)
(from the Greek root, “καλέω” or “*kaleō*,” meaning “to call,” plus the prefix “ἐν” or “*en*,” meaning “in”)



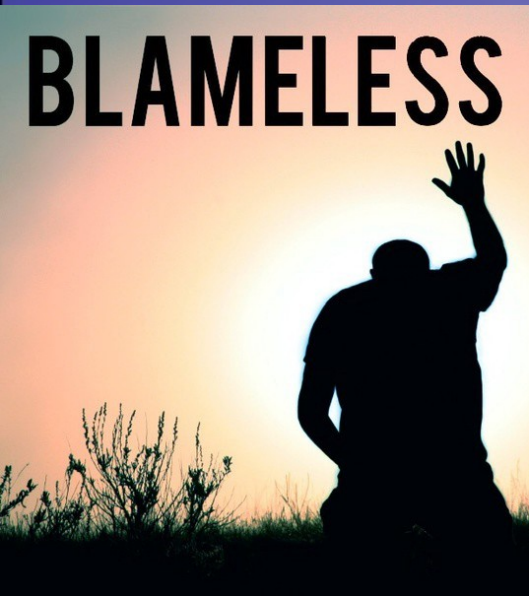
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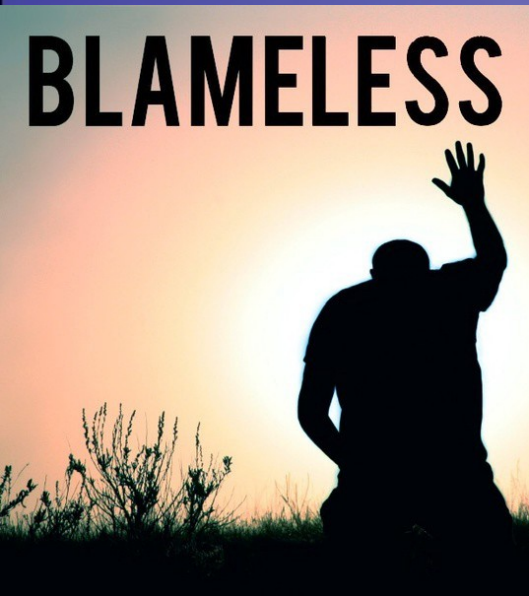
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 - That's actually another really interesting word
 - So Paul is literally saying that he's confident that the Corinthians are so "called out" for God that they'll never have to be "called in" to testify before God for any worldly sins
 - How can we apply that sort of hope in our own lives as American Christians today?



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 - So Paul is literally saying that he's confident that the Corinthians are so "called out" for God that they'll never have to be "called in" to testify before God for any worldly sins
 - But let's be honest here —Paul isn't saying this because he's confident in where they are as a church, but because he's confident in where they *could and should be*



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 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:1
 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:2-3
 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:4-6
 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:7-8
 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:9
 - Why emphasize their fellowship—their “κοινωνία” or “koinōnia”—with Christ?
 - And why emphasize that they had been actively *called* to that fellowship?
(from the Greek root, “καλέω” or “kaleō,” meaning “to call”)



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 - Please read 1 Corinthians 1:9
 - Why emphasize their fellowship—their “*κοινωνία*” or “*koinōnia*”—with Christ?
 - And why emphasize that they had been actively *called* to that fellowship?
 - Were the Corinthian Christians really living in a pure, radical, holy, and personal intimacy with one another and with Christ?
 - Were there any *other* kinds of *unhealthy* intimacy that they might have fallen into?
 - Were there any other kinds of *unhealthy lack* of intimacy that they might have fallen into?
 - What about *us* today, here in America?

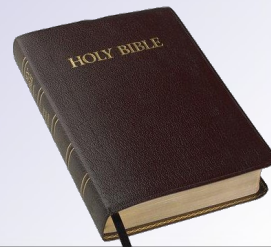


A Little Bit of Background



Funky little teaching moment...

- In fact, Paul takes his pun to another level, if we can cheat just a smidgey bit and look ahead...
 - “To the *called-out* of God in Corinth...”
 - “to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and *called* to be holy...”
 - “together with all those everywhere who *call* on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours.”
 - “He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be [*not called in*] on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - “God, who has *called* you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.”
 - “Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has *called*, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:22-24)
(i.e.; even the most clear division between you—that of Jew and Greek—is academic, since God *called both* sets of you)

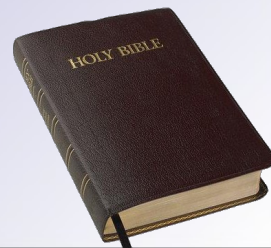


A Little Bit of Background



Funky little teaching moment...

- In fact, Paul takes his pun to another level, if we can cheat just a smidgey bit and look ahead...
- **Back in Matthew 22:14, Jesus made a distinction between those who were “called” and those who were “chosen”**
 - “Many are *invited*,”
(which is a perfectly good translation of this word)
(which actually comes from the Greek root, “καλέω” or “kaleō,” meaning “to call”)

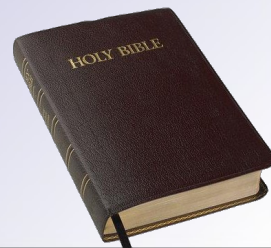


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- Back in Matthew 22:14, Jesus made a distinction between those who were “called” and those who were “chosen”
 - “Many are *called*, but few are *chosen*.”
(i.e.; “called out by name”—derived from the prefix “ἐκ” and the other most common word for “call” in Greek, “λέγω”)
(from which we get our modern English words “eclectic” and “elect”)

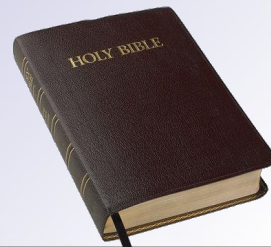


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- Back in Matthew 22:14, Jesus made a distinction between those who were “called” and those who were “chosen”
 - “Many are *called*, but few are *called out*.”
 - The image is of like the difference between being one of *several* actors invited to a casting call for a movie and being one of those *few* actors specifically picked out for the film by name by the casting director
 - The “call” or “invitation” goes out to *many* people, but only a *few* end up actually being up on the screen...

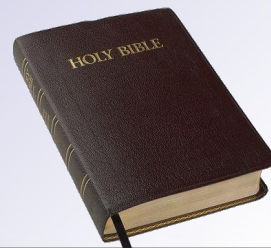


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- In fact, Paul takes his pun to another level, if we can cheat just a smidgey bit and look ahead...
- Back in Matthew 22:14, Jesus made a distinction between those who were “called” and those who were “chosen”
- So throughout 1 Corinthians 1, Paul keeps reminding the church—even by referring to them as “the church” (the “ἐκκλησία”)—that they have all been genuinely called by God
 - “Brothers, 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.” (1 Corinthians 1:26)
(i.e.; *none* of you were inherently “impressive”—that’s *not* why you were called)

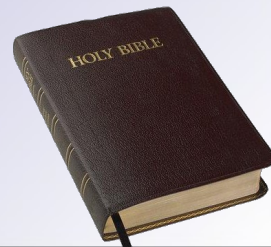


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 - “Brothers, think of what you were when you were *called*. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God *chose*—”
(again, that's Christ's “called out by name” word—derived from the other common word for “call” in Greek, “ἐκ” plus “λέγω”)



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 - “Brothers, 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. 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. He *chose* the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him.” (1 Corinthians 1:26-29)
 - Why would Paul remind the Corinthians that they'd *all* been similarly “called,” but that God has ultimately “chosen” the foolish, weak, lowly, and “despised” to shame the self-important?

