



# Blueprint for the Church:

## *Live the Gospel!*

Small Group Study Guide



1 CORINTHIANS 1:26-31

## Boast in the Lord Alone

<sup>1</sup>David Prior,  
*The Bible Speaks  
Today: Message of  
1 Corinthians*  
(Downers Grove:  
InterVarsity, 1985)  
pp. 46.

Paul is continuing to deal with the issue of division in the church that stems from the congregation aligning themselves around personalities and/or particular philosophies. Last week he addressed the issue by calling the church to focus on the message preached—the message of the cross and Christ crucified. This week’s study sees Paul present a slightly different perspective: He focuses on the reality that “God is so intent upon breaking down all human pride that he deliberately acts in such a way as to reveal its emptiness.”<sup>1</sup> Let’s look now at the progression of Paul’s argument.

1. One area where man tends to pride himself in is wisdom or intellectual ability. Give examples of groups of people in our society that take pride in their wisdom or intellectual abilities.
  - How does our culture feed this form of pridefulness?
  - Why is it difficult for those who have so much worldly wisdom and have reached great intellectual accomplishments to trust in and surrender to Christ?
  - In what way does the message of the Gospel shame those who take pride in their logical reasoning and intellectual philosophies?
2. Another area where man tends to pride himself in is might or strength. The word “might” (v. 26) carries the idea of prominence or influence. Give examples of groups of people in our society that take pride in their prominence or influence over others.
  - How does our culture feed this form of pridefulness?
  - Why is it difficult for those who have so much popularity or clout in culture to trust in and surrender to Christ?
  - In what way does the message of the Gospel shame those who take pride in their power to influence and direct the affairs of others?

### **BIBLE MEMORY:**

*Let Him who boasts,  
boast in the Lord!*

*1 Corinthians 1:31*

Don't Forget:

*Discuss the Sermon Notes from this week*

3. A third area in which man tends to pride himself is in his name or reputation. The word “noble” carries the idea of being well-bred or being a descendent of a good family. In other words, it is a person who takes pride in the reputation of their name and/or family. Give examples of groups of people in our society that take pride in either the family name or their reputation.
  - How does our culture feed this form of pridefulness?
  - Why is it difficult for those who are consumed with the greatness of their name or family reputation to trust in and surrender to Christ?
  - In what way does the message of the Gospel shame those who take pride in their name or reputation?
  
4. With the wisdom of God’s means and methods in salvation, “God is overthrowing one of the false standards of the world which is the notion that those who matter to God are wise, the well-bred, the articulate, the gifted, the wealthy, the wielders of power and influence. Such standards die very hard *even in the Christian church.*”<sup>2</sup> (emphasis added). Do you agree or disagree that this notion exists in the church? If you agree, in what ways do you see the church elevating those in these groups?
  
5. A common saying in the church is: “the ground is level at the foot of the cross”. What does this statement mean and how does Paul’s argument in this passage declare the truth of this saying?
  
6. “The Greek construction of [verse 30] sets off the word ‘wisdom’ by itself. It appears that Paul intends the last three terms to illustrate and exemplify the first.”<sup>3</sup>
  - How is God’s wisdom seen in Him declaring us not guilty (righteousness) in Christ alone? How does this eliminate any potential to take pride in any human accomplishment or act?
  - How is God’s wisdom seen in Him setting us apart for His glory (sanctification) in Christ alone? How does this eliminate any potential to take delight in what we have done?
  - How is God’s wisdom seen in Him delivering us from the bondage of sin (redemption) in Christ alone? How does this eliminate our trusting in any practice, ritual or ability?
  
7. Boasting can mean what one takes pride in, delights in, or trusts in. What are you tempted to trust in: Your wealth? Your intellect? Your name/reputation? Your influence?

<sup>2</sup>John MacArthur,  
*The MacArthur New  
 Testament Commentary:  
 1 Corinthians*  
 (Chicago: Moody, 1984)  
 pp. 29-30.

**For Next Week:**  
**Prayerfully meditate and study the following: 1 Corinthians 2:1-5**