



Uncommon Sense 1 Corinthians
Wk. 12 A Sarcastic Rebuking of Pride
By Pastor Jody May 07/13/2025

1 Corinthians 1:25 - For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Uncommon Sense - *"God's Wisdom over man's pride through a Flawed Church."*

[CALL TO HEAR]

1 Corinthians 4:6-13 ESV

⁶I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another. ⁷For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

⁸Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign, so that we might share the rule with you! ⁹For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. ¹⁰We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. ¹¹To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, ¹²and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; ¹³when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.

Pastor - "People of God, this is the Word of God."

People - "Thanks be to God."

Pray

Illustration

There is an old saying perhaps you recognize it, "Pride goes before a Fall." It is a theme that is used over and over again in our culture's most dramatic presentations. Remember the fall of [Saruman](#) in the LOTR, the book that is,



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thought he could use the evil Lord to gain power, and in return was conquered by little Hobbits? Or perhaps you remember Mr. T in Rocky 3 who pitied the fool that got in the ring with him. In the end the Italian stallion's CrossFit training out did his brute strength. And who can forget Emperor Palpatine when we saw him twice, once by his apprentice and once by his clone, die by electricity. Each person thought more of themselves than they should have and all of them were defeated by smaller and weaker opponents. That saying does have a lot of truth to it doesn't it? Well of course it does, it's the Bible!

Proverbs 16:18 ESV

Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

My task today in shortened time, is to illustrate how we are to look at the danger of pride when it comes to living out the Christian life (If all in my life is good it is probably due to my Christian living). It is something that must be addressed, even with sarcasm, if one is to take living for God seriously. To start off let me give you this main point right up front on what I believe the text is trying to get across.

MP:

**Take Pride NOT in the absence of suffering,
but in how you embrace it**

We will see three ways, in the text, on how to combat pride. 1st Pander not to your own Pride. 2nd Pretend not to be Privileged. 3rd Praise God in all Predicaments. Because if you choose Pride then like the promise of Proverbs says, you may not get too far in this life as a Christian, and that has eternal consequences.

1. Pander not to your own Pride.

⁶I have **applied all these things** to myself and Apollos for your **benefit**, brothers, that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another. ⁷For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?



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Paul says I have “**applied all these things**” to myself and Apollos. That means the minister that they like to play favorites with (Apollos), the one they boast in knowing, the one whose name that they like to use to make the church the way they want it. Paul says, yeah that guy, he takes orders from me, I am the Apostle, and I have applied all these things to us. **What things Paul?**

All those things we talked about last week. Apollos and I, we view ourselves as Servants, of the lowest kind (where the will has been replaced with loyalty for the master), and stewards that only do God’s will, and we applied those things to us so we would be found faithful when Jesus judges all on the last day. It just means we didn’t do a thing to please you BUT all we did was “**for your benefit**” (v.6). **What benefit do you speak of Paul?**

The one that keeps you from not building up your own pride, the one that keeps you from thinking you did anything to earn your Salvation from God. We work hard at living as humble servants so you would heed the warning found in God’s Word, “**that is written**”, that’s a reference to the entire message of the OT to not think too highly of yourself; No other gods, don’t invoke my name in sinful pursuits, no graven images, because God shares glory with no one. We lived humbly so you would not become heretical.

There is nothing to have pride in Corinthians, you did not do anything to get your status of being a child of God, you were adopted. Adopted kids have no say in that process. So, **stop pandering to your own pride**, or stop gratifying yourself, indulging yourself, on what you think you have accomplished, there is no accomplishment that Paul knows of that should make them boast, or debate, or fight to gain a pecking order.

Paul is trying to get these Corinthians ready for a come to Jesus meeting he’s about to have with them for the rest of this letter. Unification will come in shared beliefs but not in the shared beliefs they hold to currently. Here is where their Pride got them into deep trouble: they **believed their Salvation gave them the right to behave in whatever manner they wanted**. Paul needs to change this opinion of themselves this pandering to their pride, for if he doesn’t preach against it, they will never want to leave it.



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So, the basic logic that Paul is using is **if you had to receive something to be saved then there is no reason to boast.**

If you had to have someone sent to you, to bring you the Gospel, then you were **reliant on another's good will** to **act first** on your behalf.

If you had someone that had to preach to you, then you had not the knowledge you needed, but had to have someone explain it to you.

If you had to have someone, use their own resources; money, time, and energy then you were too poor to pay for it.

There is nothing here worthy to boast about, other than what God did for you!

Students you all just got back from a weeklong, sun drenched, hot summer week full of work.

The World Changers Group sent you to some people that needed the love of the Gospel.

You spent part of that time in prayer, walks, and door to door conversations, in not so nice areas, with the citizens of that town to give them the good word of the Gospel.

You earned that right to speak to them by spending the church's resources on construction materials, food and water, time away from home, family, and air conditioning.

All of that was done so that those **people could never boast** about how they achieved a right standing God but that they must give that glory to God and humbly admit that He loved them first. Thank you for being faithful to that calling!

Family let us all be like our young mission field workers. Let us take the time, effort, and wisdom, that God gives us and let us put those efforts towards building His Kingdom. Let our homes be places of worship, let our hands and feet be delivery modes of mercy, and let our mouths boast in a God that provides the means. So that none may boast may we work hard at our job of being ministers of the Gospel, so that new converts don't get caught up in pandering to their own pride.

This coming school year parents open your homes to the friends of your kids and show them devoted Christian living. Kids don't just go to school to



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receive an education but go to give the Gospel. May we all dedicate ourselves to the act of prayer and study so that we will all have the words of Gospel encouragement when the time comes. May it never be said of us we were pandering to our pride but instead let us commit to the life of enduring hard things for the sake of Gospel expansion.

2. Pretend not to be Privileged

⁸Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign, so that we might share the rule with you! ⁹For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men.

I know I have said before from this platform that Sarcasm is wrong, don't use it in your marriages for correction, don't use it on your kids for discipline, and don't use it with your neighbors to communicate wants, but here is the 1% of the time when Sarcasm should be allowed, in public discourse. Paul uses it as a masterful tool not to make fun of the Corinthians but to show them the wisdom of man has failed them. That their common sense is actually NONSENSE! He wants to wake them up to the reality that is before them. Therefore, he goes from using logic in vs 6-7 and now he resorts to sarcasm in 8-9 for effect.

Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign, so that we might share the rule with you! Oh, if only it was true, Apollos and I could retire and rule with you! But the fact is that I am here in Ephesus, I am still on the road (3rd missionary trip), I am still being chased, I am still being imprisoned, I am still being beat, I am still in fear of my life, I'm still poor, if only I could be like you!

⁹For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. Paul then elaborates on his positioning. It seems that God has determined to use '**us**' as public displays, spectacles, to show something to every created creature, even it causes one's death (death is not



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a deterrence to God to use His people for His causes). Yes, you are right God chooses to display those He saves, and the more notoriety you have the more responsibility you have for sharing it for God.

So here it is **Paul's point**: For Christians that want to flaunt some type of privilege, for Christians that want to show off the benefits of their Salvation, what is it that you should be showing off? **How well you get to suffer for Christ!** Now it wouldn't make sense would it Corinthians, that the Apostles first tier Christians would be called to live a more harsher life than you, that actually goes against your human wisdom, but it does go along with what Christ thinks:

Matthew 20:16 ESV

"So the last will be first, and the first last."

Paul is like I'm sorry, but I don't think you get it, you weren't called to flaunt a fake physical privilege when the reality is you were called to display your authentic Christianity IN how well you can suffer and endure all things! As a matter of fact, the Lord Himself taught us all not to go along with the wisdom of this age that the Gentiles take pride in, which Corinthians you fall so easily into.

Matthew 20:25b-28 ESV

You know that **the rulers of the Gentiles** lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ²⁶ It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, ²⁸ even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Family, it doesn't mean we all are gonna be like Paul and be physically assaulted for spreading the Gospel, although that could be the path for some in here. What it does mean though:

God is a God that doesn't save us out of the trials of this world but saves us **THROUGH them!**

God doesn't always give out physical blessings, but He will bless you with a life that can show **Heavenly ones!**



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God doesn't fill up our lives with earthly joys and contentment but glorifies Himself **through our joy in Him!**

God uses the lives of His people, all of them, to show that they have found something better than this world! Public Christianity is the display of a life that finds its' privilege in being associated with the Christ that came and served and gave His life as a ransom! AND it doesn't stop at stoicism, or just suffering in silent bravado, no it is because the CHRISTIAN has found TRUE FAITH, HOPE, and LOVE in getting to be represent Christ in this age!

This past week our young folk have just experienced, along with Pastor Bill and Bonnie, is what we all should be feeling from time to time in our lives; bone weary exhaustion because we have been living for Christ. For all Christians everywhere, we should have lives where people look at us and say "jeeze" that was hard! Perhaps we won't have stories of how we were imprisoned, abandon, and whipped because our stories fit more to the heartaches and stories of this age:

Yeah, I got cancer, had a heart attack, a stroke, a chronic immune/neurological disorder that crippled me for years, and it about did me in! It took all our money, patience, and time but people saw Jesus in me when I went through it.

Yeah, my spouse cheated on me, or had a porn addiction, or was abusive, or was unfaithful in some way but I stayed, I kept my vows, I honored God, and I was given a chance to declare Jesus' goodness to someone.

Yeah, I lost a child or aborted one, or I am a widow, or my parents are gone now, and I almost died myself BUT I never lost hope because I believe in a Sovereign God who saves, who perseveres in me, and who reigns over death. AND I got to tell about the power of Jesus' resurrection and its' promises for me.

Then when the Christian gets to the end of his life, its' not a life full of sadness, hopelessness, and disdain, but it is a life full of joy knowing you fought a good fight, you finished the race, you kept the faith (2 Tim 4:7). So that what you wanted your whole life to hear, the only person that ever really understood you, the only one that can judge you rightly, could finally look at you and say *well done my good and faithful servant!*



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Let us be a people that stop pretending to have some special privilege in this world that is shown in our physical blessings but let us be a people that display the privilege of getting to live for Christ, by thriving through our trials.

3. Praise God in all Predicaments.

¹⁰We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute

Verse 10 explains how people gain the benefits of a true Gospel, since you couldn't work for it, you couldn't earn it, and you did not make it!

Paul says the life that we have lived as spectacles on display was all done for you. By us becoming **fools for Christ's sake**, by living contrary to the world and how it says to live, **you Corinthians, gained the knowledge** of how you should be living for God. How we were treated in front of you, put in chains, put in prison, put down in the public square you became strong for you are now **prepared for what may come next in your life**. And through us being held in disrepute by this world you gained the **honor of knowing God**.

We praise God for our treatment for your sake and you should praise God about our treatment for what you gained by it! Family there isn't a life changed in this world by the Gospel that one of God's saints did not help pay for it. If you are a Christian in here today that was brought to you in part by the co-laborers with Christ. Spend more time in praising God for the things He has brought his people through for it is through their predicaments you gained the blessings of the Gospel. Students again, **know this**, by you looking like fools in the FI sun, sweating for people who do not know your name, it helped bring some closer to the Kingdom of God!

Then in vs. 11-13 we see what this preparation can do for you, when you are indeed taught the wisdom of God.

¹¹To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, ¹²and we labor, working with our own hands.



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To this present moment Paul says there is no rest in the Gospel work. The Apostle isn't somewhere taking a break to write this letter, no he is writing this letter under current persecution hiding from the Jews in Ephesus. This is not coming from the hand of some exalted bishop sitting somewhere in some lofty temple tower. This letter is written by the old hand of a man with the scars from shackles on his wrists and ankles, the marks of the strikes by rods on his back, dents on his skull and fractures in his bones from being stoned. When he writes this letter, he is in a home that belongs to someone else for he has no place to call his own, and the labor he does with his own hands goes to fund his own missionary trips. There is no pride in his position outside of Christ, and no pretending about privilege other than he gets to say it was for Christ.

Now we have got to ask then what is the gain in this type of life Paul?

When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; ¹³when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.

The Lord has rewarded Paul with the revelation **what all Christians need** if they are going to make an impact in this world and follow the Lord. Suffering for Christ, when you know it is for Him, takes what the world throws at you and turns it into a blessing. Paul says when we, that means the promise for us now! Paul went from Apollos and I, to just him, and now includes all of us this promise is for the church!

When we are reviled, we bless. Means you get to practice loving your neighbor as yourself, it is the best way to get the attention of this world when you choose to love and enemy!

When persecuted we endure. Persecution is usually done to get people to give up but when we endure, we show that our wants are not tied up in the physical world but the world to come. It builds your faith and the faith of those around you!

When slandered for what we believe, we beg others to believe the same, showing that the Gospel is the only thing that offers protection against slander! Having your name slandered means you have been found worthy of God's name, it strengthens the resolve of the Christian.



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We have become the scum of the world and refuse of all things. This last phrase is interesting, **scum**. That was sometimes used in the Greek/Gentile world to talk about the person that was pinpointed in the community to take on all the disdain, the get blamed for all the problems, to become the town scapegoat.¹

In effect when all these things have been done onto you it prepares you to become the one that takes the sin of others and displays them in your life. How they treat you reflects how they deserve to be treated. Praise God if that happens to you for you have become the ultimate Gospel weapon to fight the disbelief common in man when they see the realities of Christ's suffering in you.

The Lord knows this and has left us all with this good news.

Matthew 5:10-12 ESV

¹⁰"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹"Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Blessed/Happy is the person who is persecuted for they have found the Kingdom (10). The Kingdom doesn't entitle an easy life, but it gives meaning to the life you are living.

Blessed are you when others persecute you for great is your reward in heaven (11). The Kingdom life is not about getting privilege now, it's not about living proud now, but it is living with pride in Christ for what is to come. Family I hope you see if anything today:

MP:

¹ Vaughan, Curtis & Lea, Thomas D, [1Corinthians](#), Founders Study Guide Commentary (Cape Coral, FL: Founders Press, 2002), 55.



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**Take Pride not in how you avoid suffering
but in how you embrace it.**

[CALL TO OBEY]

- **Embrace a Teachable Spirit.**

Proverbs 13:18 ESV

Poverty and disgrace come to him who ignores instruction, but whoever heeds reproof is **honored**.

Embracing that means just settling on the fact it needs to be this way. When we embrace a teachable spirit, that already sets you apart from about 50% of the world. When you think you have it all figured out, that is exactly when scripture says you are a fool.

For the Christian you can always get better, no one in here has mastered the art of study and application, all have room to improve. By embracing a teachable spirit, the promise in that Proverbs is that God will do the honoring, means He will do the lifting up, He will use your efforts for Him.

- **Embrace a Servant's Heart.**

Philippians 2:3-5 ESV

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,

You can't practice being a Christian if you are practicing always putting you first in all things. So, the way we practice having a servant's heart is you pay attention to those around you, what they need, where they hurt, and then apply your wisdom of God to their predicament.

Some need a word, some need an act of kindness, and all need prayer. Everyone we meet in the Kingdom, in this church, most likely needs help



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somewhere in their lives. First part, get to know them, second, take an interest in them as you would for yourself, third love them as Christ.

- **Embrace an attitude of gratitude.**

1 Thessalonians 5:18 ESV

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

We don't just give thanks to God when things are doing well, we give thanks to God even when things are bad. Why? Because the Providential hand of God has moved things in such a way that will reveal His glory whether in your delivery from a situation or your patient endurance through one. At the same time, we give praise for our hard times, for it is someone else's window into the Kingdom of God.

A good practice is everyday pick a part of your prayer time and specifically only practice praise. Even praising God when your heart is not in it, will change that downcast disposition, as you give God proper praise for just being His servant.

Family again let me remind you of this simple point.

MP:

**Take Pride not in how you avoid suffering
but in how you embrace it.**

And may God bless all with the peace that surpasses all understanding.

Prayer

Communion

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 ESV

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given



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thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."²⁵ In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Today when you eat of the bread remember the life of Jesus which was lived for us. In this life he never tooted His own horn, He gave glory to the Father in all things! In His ministry He never assumed the privilege of His position but instead worked as a man that had no place to lay His head. In His vocation He who is first over all became a servant as a ransom for His people. Praise be to our Savior for His perfect submission to the life He was given.

Today when you drink the juice remember the cost of our sin displayed by His blood for the new covenant. While we sought out in our lives the easiest path, a path that elevated us above God, He bore the price for that treason. When we chose pride He chose sacrifice, when we desired privilege he chose servant, and when it came the time to pay for our sin, He gave His life in our place. Praise be to Him for His wonderful love.

[CONFESSION OF FAITH]

* The Congregation will stand

Elder – "Christians, what do we believe?"

Congregation – recites:

LBCF 1689 Chapter 27.1 The Communion of the Saints

All saints are united to Jesus Christ their head by his Spirit and by faith, although this does not make them one person with him. They have fellowship in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory.¹ Since they are united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces² and are obligated to carry out these duties, both public and private, in an orderly way to promote their mutual good, both in the inner and outer aspects of their lives.³



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11 John 1:3; John 1:16; Philippians 3:10; Romans 6:5, 6.
2Ephesians 4:15, 16; 1 Corinthians 12:7; 1Corinthians 3:21-23.
31 Thessalonians 5:11, 14; Romans 1:12; 1 John 3:17, 18; Galatians 6:10.

[OFFERING+LAST SONG]

[BENEDICTION]

Go in the name of the Father, that has provided the way to conquer our pride,
His only begotten Son in whom He is well pleased.

Go in the name of the Son, that conquered not only pride in His life but in our
as well by a life well spent in servanthood.

Go in the name of and power of the HS, that open our eyes to the wisdom of
God, helping us to fight pride and privilege, and sending us into the world to
resemble our Lord.



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