

The Saints in Corinth, Part 1

INTRODUCTION

Paul instructed the church at Corinth in the truth of the doctrines of grace in faithfulness to his calling as an Apostle of Christ. In his first letter to the Corinthians, he did not stray away from proclaiming the fundamental truths of the faith, for this is exactly what the church in Corinth needed. In this lecture, Dr. Lawson surveys the book of 1 Corinthians with a focus on the doctrines of irresistible grace, total depravity, and unconditional election.

LEARNING GOALS

When you have finished this lesson, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate the doctrines of irresistible grace, total depravity, and unconditional election using select verses from 1 Corinthians
- Understand the reasons why God uses the weak and foolish things of this world in order to accomplish His mission through the church

KEY IDEAS

- The church at Corinth had significant issues, and the believers there were immature in the faith, yet the Apostle Paul straightforwardly instructs them in the doctrines of grace.
- We are only saved through the irresistible call of God's grace, overcoming everything within ourselves that once worked against our comprehension of the gospel.
- God demonstrates His power through the weak and foolish things of this world—namely, through us.

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before the Video

What Do You Think?

Take a moment to answer the following questions. They will prepare you for the lecture.

- What do you know about the church in Corinth? How would you characterize the people there?
- How are the doctrines of grace presented in your church? Are they a regular part of its teaching?
- Why would God use the weak and foolish things of this world to accomplish His purposes?

Scripture Reading

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge—even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you—so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

—1 Corinthians 1:4–9

- What doctrines of grace can you identify here in Paul’s opening thanksgiving for the believers at Corinth?

During the Video

Answer the following questions while you watch the video. They will guide you through the lecture.

The Mighty Call of God

0:00–10:18

- What do the two instances of the form of the verb “to call” indicate in 1 Corinthians 1:2?

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- What are we called into, according to 1 Corinthians 1:9? Explain what this means.

The Lowly of This World

10:18–25:02

- What does Paul mean by “not many wise,” “not many mighty,” and “not many noble” (NASB) in 1 Corinthians 1:26?
- What did Dr. Lawson note as the great summary statement in 1 Corinthians 1:30 for how we have come to know Christ?
- What does 1 Corinthians 1:30 reveal that Christ Jesus became to us?

After the Video

Answer the following questions after you have finished the lecture. They will help you identify and summarize the major points.

- Why does the call of God need to be powerful and effectual? What does this reveal about the relationship between the doctrines of grace?
- What were the multiple reasons given in this lecture for why God has determined to use the weak and foolish in the world to accomplish His purposes?
- How does Paul demonstrate the continuity of God’s ways in the Old and New Testaments at the end of 1 Corinthians 1? Of the Old Testament illustrations of this provided by Dr. Lawson, which one was your favorite?

PRAYER

Commit what you have learned from God's Word in this lesson to prayer.

- Praise God for using His wisdom and strength, not our own.
- Confess prideful thoughts and feelings by which you exalt yourself above others.
- Thank God for breaking through your heart of stone so that you could respond in faith to Jesus Christ.
- Ask God for opportunities to minister to the weak and lowly, that they may behold Christ in you, hear the gospel you share, and be saved for God's glory.